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A WEEKLY JOURNAL OF MASCULINE INTEREST.

No. 62. [PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY.] WEEK ENDING JANUARY 8TH, 1910. ONE PENNY.

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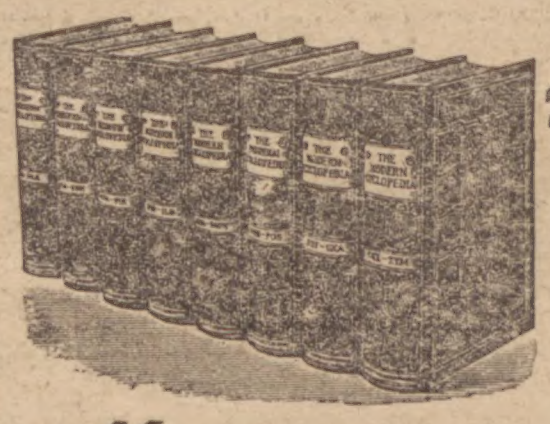

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The Modern Man

I dare do all that may become a man. Who dares do more is none.—MACBETH.

A WEEKLY JOURNAL OF MASCULINE INTEREST.

No. 62. WEEK ENDING JANUARY 8TH, 1910. ONE PENNY.

READING FOR EXAMS.

HOW TO "COME TO THE POST" FIT AND READY.

In preparing for an exam. one should never forget that, as in most other things, "generalship," as a well-known University coach used to say, is the foremost factor of success.

Take the case of a man who is reading at home for an examination like the London Matric. He will have to wrestle at odd times with a variety of subjects, almost all of which, if he is a specialist, as most of us are after a certain age, will be little known and rather arduous to him. Here a paper in English and two in elementary mathematics are obligatory; and three must be chosen from a list of various languages—Latin, Greek, French, German, and so forth; and different sciences and branches of learning such as mechanics, chemistry, electricity, ancient and modern history, and so on.

Well, it is obvious that to a man who is a specialist in perhaps one subject, the others will be very irksome; and as it is necessary to satisfy the examiners in each at the same exam., a considerable amount of work will be required.

But bear in mind that all this work should be systematically split up. Say, for instance, that you are a "languages man," and are taking Latin, French, and German as your optional subjects. Go to work in this way.

Think out which of your subjects are strongest; and arrange them in order. Perhaps they will be French (strongest), Latin (good), German (moderate), English literature and grammar (moderate), and mathematics ("rocky").

Again, let us suppose you have six months to read in. Your best plan is to take one day a week for each subject, for if you take more than one a day, those you take at the end of the day are bound to suffer. Take your weakest subjects in the early part of the week, when your brain is freshest, thus:

Monday, Geometry; Tuesday, Arithmetic and Algebra; Wednesday, English; Thursday, German; Friday, Latin; and Saturday, a fairly short day at your strong subject, French.

Always take Sundays off. Even if you aren't a strictly religious chap, you will find that one day entirely off in the week will save you from getting "stale"; and staleness is the cause of many a failure, no less in exams. than in athletics.

If possible keep your evenings, after about six, for recreation. Have a good walk, or get into running clothes and take a spin either along the roads or across country; but don't tire yourself. Bodily exhaustion speedily reacts on the mind.

Again, some people talk about eating nothing but fish when reading for exams. This is nonsense, and is probably the cause of very many failures, and cases of brain fever. Eat good wholesome food of the kind to which you are accustomed. Eat enough, but not too much.

Lastly, here is a very important tip. Even at the risk of a few scornful remarks tell your pals not to "drop in" on you until the evening hours.

J. RINGSFORD.

CHEEK.

It was stated in court recently that a naval stoker had been charged interest by a moneylender at the rate of 431 per cent. No wonder he fired up.

* * *

WHAT THEY LIKE BEST.

[Mr. George Graves, we learn from a contemporary, is an habitué of Olympia, and Mr. Kenneth Douglas declares rinking to be the best possible weight-reducer.]

Now, rinking, they say, all the rage is,
And dear to the heart of the stage is;
But prefix a "d"
To the word, and you'll see
What is dearest to "pros'." of all ages.

* * *

A brewing company states that it will be impossible for it to pay a dividend under Mr. Asquith's Government's legislation. Apparently, at this General Election, the brewers will have to put up a "stout" fight, or they will suffer "bitter" defeat.

* * *

"Naval Intelligence," runs a newspaper headline. Some horrid pessimists say that there's no such thing.

* * *

"Such nonsense!" snorted dear old Mrs. Footler. "I've no patience with all this licence twaddle for the theatres and the music-halls! Why can't they both be licentious and have done with it?"

* * *

Says the "Tailor and Cutter" anent the cloth cap, "This hideous style of headgear has been undermining the taste of the people." Or captivating their captiousness, which?

* * *

MAN'S ONE COLOUR.

[A prominent West-End boot firm, we understand, sells ladies' shoes of no less than twenty-two different colours.]

The tints in ladies' shoes to-day
Amount to twenty-two;
But, wives, don't buy the whole lot, pray!
Your lords would all turn blue!

* * *

Mr. W. Lotinga says that owners, trainers, and jockeys do not like what racing-men term "talking horses." They're too apt to give one away. Am I right, sir?

* * *

Miss Zena Dare says that women always dress more carefully to go out with other women, as the fair sex are more apt to criticise what you have got on. That's true; but girls always are most careful to please the men when they want to "get off."

* * *

"Nowadays," says Mr. Plowden, "it is left for women to excel in violence." At any rate, we know that they can't be beaten at coming to the scratch!

J. S. COX.

THE PLEASURE OF BEING SUITABLY DRESSED.

HAVE YOU EVER NOTICED IT?

It happens to every man at least once in his lifetime that he finds himself dressed absolutely unsuitably.

Very often it happens when he is young. He has been invited to attend a smoking concert, with the assurance that it is "quite a Bohemian affair," and that he can dress just as he pleases. He turns up in a navy blue suit, and discovers that every other man present is in evening dress. He remains a few minutes, wondering whether the man who gave him the ticket deceived him intentionally or not, and then he beats a hasty retreat.

His feelings are extremely uncomfortable, but they are not a whit worse than those of the man who turns up at a function in evening dress where every other man is wearing a lounge suit.

The pain felt by the person who is unsuitably dressed is extreme and unforgetable, but besides the care that one must take to avoid such pain, it is also worth while to take some trouble to obtain the pleasure that comes from being dressed suitably.

It does not cost very much to be suitably dressed, provided that you do not accept invitations for social functions that are beyond the reach of your pocket.

Talking of social functions, an evening dress suit with a smart vest and a few well-made ties and shirts and collars are all that a man need bother about. Any sort of ove. oat will do at a pinch, for the overcoat is left in the cloakroom, and its cut or quality remains undiscovered except by the few.

It is doubtful, however, whether there is any genuine pleasure to be obtained in attending an evening dress function if you do not possess the whole of the proper equipment. There is a feeling, as you go up the steps, that you are slinking into a place where you should not be by rights. It is very different when you are turned out as you feel you ought to be, with every necessary accessory, for then you arrive with the confidence that leaves you open to extract every ounce of pleasure that the particular function may be capable of giving you.

The sportsman, however, is more concerned with outdoor life than with social functions, and his chief concern is to equip himself in such a way that he can enjoy all weathers.

A straight tip for a bad weather costume in the country is to wear a flannel collar instead of a linen one. No matter what may be the shape of your cap, a certain amount of rain is bound to trickle down the back of your head, and the moisture will at once make a linen collar most uncomfortable, whereas it does not seem to affect the texture of a flannel collar at all.

G. C. HUDSON.

In A Friend's Rooms

THE NEED FOR TACT IN GUEST AND HOST.

When a man calls upon a stranger, or upon one who is not a friend, he is careful to observe a very correct attitude with regard to his general behaviour.

He respects the fact that a man's house is his castle. He knows that he is expected to conduct himself in such a way as to show this respect for an acknowledged truth, and he would no more think of showing what may be called a free and easy manner towards the man he is visiting than he would think of running off with the valuable objects he may see lying about him.

The unwritten rules that would guide his conduct in the case of a stranger, undergo quite naturally a gradual relaxation in their observance in proportion to the degree of social intimacy and general equality in which visitor and visited stand towards each other.

UNDYING CONVENTION.

At no point, even among the most intimate friends whose relations are the result of long-standing and cordial intercourse, do these laws reach vanishing point. The code remains at all times, though the punctilious observance of every item may have ceased, owing to the increase of cordiality and the natural claims of friendship.

No man who goes for a long or short period into the rooms of his friend as a guest can ever be absolved from certain duties, positive and negative ones, which he ought, out of chivalry, respect, and out of friendship itself, to perform.

Indeed, to attempt to throw every convention to the four winds, even though it be done in an excess of cordiality, and even affection, for one's pal, is one of the surest ways of putting an end to friendship.

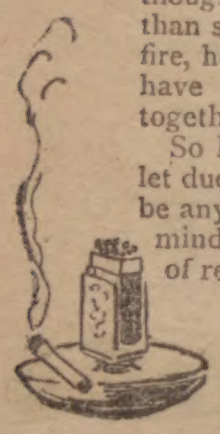
To begin at the very beginning of things, then, I would urge the necessity of giving even a dear pal a certain amount of warning of your approach.

Thus, we have all of us suffered from the sudden whirlwind intrusion of the pal who will not allow himself to be announced in the ordinary way, but who insists on brushing aside all initial formality (and the opener of the door into the bargain), and rushing headlong upstairs to one's very door, bursting in without a word or a knock or a "by-your-leave."

THE WARNING KNOCK.

Though the average sporting Englishman is seldom at a disadvantage when taken by surprise he is nevertheless grateful for a warning, and even though he might be doing nothing more serious than smoking a cigarette and lounging before the fire, he would in his heart prefer that he should have half-a-dozen seconds just to pull himself together.

So I would at the outset advise a visiting pal to let due warning be given. His reception may not be any different, and as hearty as usual, but in the mind of the host there may lurk just a suspicion of resentment.



Having once gained admission to a pal's rooms, a man's behaviour requires much tact. It will tend to pleasantness if he refrains from throwing himself down into the most comfortable, or even into any chair, before he has been invited to do so.

A friend who has a welcome visitor will not expect his visitor to stand stockstill until he himself says: "Please take a seat," or "Won't you be seated," or anything so formal and cold. But it is better to be grasped by the hand by one's host and led to the seat of honour (and warmth and comfort, too).

FORESTALLING A COURTESY.

The host likes to do this with a good pal. He enjoys the feeling that he is entertaining a good fellow, and to rob him of his opportunities for showing these little attentions makes him feel rather out in the cold, even in his own diggings.

There are some men—the best of fellows, but most infernally irritating—who will make pie of a pal's rooms in no time. They will go a tour of inspection, taking up this photograph, or that trophy, or the other bit of sporting tackle, and will generally make free with everything in the place, ending by putting them all back in disorder or leaving them to be rearranged by the host when he has time and can do so without hurting his guest's feelings. For the good host is a monument of tact, and forethought for his guests.

But a man's rooms are not a museum, where the notice "Please do not touch" should be exhibited. It is a very different matter to admire a pal's odds and ends, and to show pleasure in hearing all about his household gods, but let it be done discreetly.

POKING THE FIRE.

The fire is a pitfall for many a visitor. It is a good old maxim that a man should never poke the fire in his host's house or rooms before he has known him seven years. After that time such a degree of friendship and intimate understanding may be expected to have grown up between them as to warrant the liberty.

For after all a fire in a friend's room should be almost as fully respected as his purse or his private correspondence.

Often from a sheer desire to gratify his host's feelings a guest will show so much interest in the things about him as to wish to borrow them—books, for instance, or a hundred and one other things.

But here again, if a host desires to lend a guest anything, he would surely offer to do so when he saw that his guest desired such a loan.

I have often thought of putting up on a card behind my door, "Please do not try to borrow anything, as I do not wish to annoy you by refusing," after the manner of the notices in little shops where people sometimes "ask for credit."

PETTY ANNOYANCES.

There are many minor matters in which a thoughtless guest is liable to give, if not offence, at least a cause for irritation, to his host.

Personally I almost burst with indignation when a guest grinds his hard heels against the rungs of my choicest chairs. Many men have this abominable trick, and will often vary it by tilting back the chair on its hind legs, and so putting an almost insupportable strain on the chair—a strain it was never meant to bear.

I am proud of my chairs, and I like to think their various qualities are appreciated.

Tact, tact, and again tact, is required of the guest in as high a degree as it is necessary in the host. A visit will develop its own cordial atmosphere of comradeship all the sooner, if at the outset there is a thorough appreciation of what is expected both from host and guest.

Conventions, even among sportsmen, were not set up just for the fun of the thing. They have their use in making the wheels of life run smoothly.

W. TAYLOR.

BOXING MADE SIMPLE.

SECOND LESSON.

I trust that in this series of articles you will excuse me if I mention points that seem to be obvious, and also that you will pardon me if I seem to enforce a point too much by referring to it frequently.

For my own part, I am only fairly well educated but I have had the pleasure of teaching boxing to many men who have had very fine educations; but in every case I have found that when it comes to learning a thing that is not concerned with books, they forget what I have told them in previous lessons, and find themselves very much "at sea." It is funny sometimes to notice the look of surprise and annoyance that comes into the face of a man who has quite forgotten what I taught him at our last meeting.

III.—Taking advantage of his carelessness.

He knows he is clever at picking up most things, and he cannot understand why he should forget what I have shown him. But all the same, I have found by experience that men do forget what they were taught at the previous lesson, and therefore I should strongly advise you to go over very carefully my last article once more before starting to practise the new hits I am going to show you.

The third hit is another where your adversary gives you an opening through his carelessness. In this case, instead of having his left hand pointing directly towards you, he is holding it too high up.

That gives you a chance which you must not miss.

Push his left outwards with your own right, so that he cannot hit you with it, and at the same moment step in quickly and counter him on the face with your left.

You must do this, and all other hits, rapidly and unexpectedly, for otherwise he will have time to correct his error, and may see what you are up to.

The fourth hit is another way of dealing with him when he commits the same error of holding his left too high.

His left glove and forearm are no longer guarding his waist-line as they ought to do, and you can catch him one by simply stepping sharply forward and slightly to your own left so that you get inside his left. At the same time deliver on his waist-line a right-hand body-blow.

IV.—A Body Blow.

In delivering this blow, keep the back of your glove upwards; in actual fighting you would catch him with your front knuckles and not with your back ones.

I strongly recommend that you should practise these various hits with a friend, and also that you should practise them occasionally by yourself with an imaginary opponent, for to go through the various hits is a very good form of physical culture.

My usual custom is to give a pupil half an hour with the hits and half an hour's sparring, and I advise you to follow the same plan in practising these hits with your friend.

G. GOWING.

[*Another article of this series will appear next week.*—EDITOR.]

THE GOOSEBERRY BOTTLE

COMPLETE SHORT STORY.

By HOUGHTON GERRARD.

Outside, the night was very dark, not a star showing in the canopy of black velvet. And the darkness was of the kind that enshrouds, haunts one, and permits of no shadows.

To the east, faint lightning flickered occasionally. Low down on the sky-line the winking glare momentarily silhouetted the odd shape of the Gooseberry Bottle—the converted lower story of an ancient mill—and rimmed it with the brilliance of corona fires, so that it looked a trifle more weird than it really was in point of fact.

On Bartlesham Common the keeper of the Falgate Arms poked his shiny bald pate out into the night and predicted rough weather. In the roosts the domestic fowls were settling to rest with some apparent difficulty, a "cluck" here, a protesting crow there. The night foreboded evil things. . . .

George Knowler, the Innkeeper, shut the door, and with a satisfied sigh of deep content he returned to the comfort of his high-backed arm-chair by the gaily roaring fire.

The breeze outside made up, gathered itself billow-wise for an effort, then flung itself on the ill-made window frames, shrieking through the draught-cracks, and retreated, moaning dismally. There was a lull; then, clatter-clatter, the hail rattled with Maxim-gun rapidity, short and sharp, upon the windows.

"Not fit to turn out a dog!" Mr. Knowler said to Mr. "Nimble" Betherden, of the village, who pulled silently at a dirty clay, and had spoken no word for the space of ten minutes.

"Nimble," Betherden merely nodded, and observed that the hanging-lamp required trimming, and that possibly there was no oil in the reservoir.

"I'll get 'un down, George," he said, slowly. "I'm taller nor you."

"No—no, don't," said the Innkeeper nervously. "You might upset the Bottle nearby. Not that it matters much y' know. But you *might*."

He ended the sentence in some confusion.

"Wha's in that bottle?" said Mr. Betherden slowly. "Wha's in that dirty brown vinegary stuff? Years ago my gran'mother had a bottle like that. She used to preserve gooseberries in it.

"Tha's no wonder," said Mr. Knowler. "That *is* a gooseberry bottle, that is."

"Don't be so shirty about it," said Mr. Betherden in injured tones. "I ha' got a whisky bottle at home. The missus keeps paraffin in it."

"That ain't paraffin in *that* bottle," Mr. Knowler went on complacently.

"Then what is ut?" asked Mr. Betherden.

"I'll give ye three guesses," said the Innkeeper, after some thought. "And if ye guess right, I'll tell ye. It's a bargain!"

"Pickled walnuts," said Mr. Betherden.

"Wrong."

"Onions," said Mr. Betherden.

"Wrong."

"Gooseberries," Mr. Betherden hazarded in despair.

"Wrong."

"Then it's like my whisky bottle," said Betherden, triumphantly. "It ain't livin' up to its reputation. . . . My sakes, but listen to the wind. Rackon I shall have to sleep here to-night. And look at that lamp! Tell ye, it'll be out in a minute!"

The outer door rattled.

"'Oos *that?*" Mr. Betherden asked.

"'Oos there?" echoed the landlord.

"'Tis the wind," said Mr. Betherden.

"You ha' got the fidgets to-night, landlord."

"Don't like these here nights," said the landlord, looking into the fire. "The wind makes you think o' things. And here it sounds like so many lost spirits moaning over their earthly crimes and writhing in the agony o' remorse."

The latch was raised suddenly, and a gust of wind swept across the room, rocking the hanging-lamp that sputtered and almost went out.

A tramp entered. His spare, ill-conditioned form was silhouetted against the firelight's glow.

"Not here," said the landlord. "Not here, and good-night to ye. No, sir, stand him nothing! It encourages the likes of him, and I don't want 'em interferin' with the customers in my house. Trade's bad enough now. Good-night, I say, and close the door after ye!"

The tramp drew his rags round him and turned despairingly to the door.

"Go on," said "Nimble" Betherden, "I'll stand the man a pint!"

"Never give a man nothin' *for* nothin," said the landlord, sententiously. "It encourages good-for-nothingness. 'Sides, he 'ont stand ye a pint back, Nimble, and he ain't no friend o' yourn. Company o' such as him do the house no good. Why, I'd as soon have the Master o' the Gooseberry Bottle and his familiars for to sit up by the chimney corner!"

The shivering tramp raised an emaciated arm.

"And it's his curse I put on ye!" he said. He shook his unkempt head of hair.

"Poof!" said the landlord. "D'ye think ye're talkin' to an old woman o' the village. Such nonsense might do for them—and childer. Begone, I say!"

The tramp shuffled to the centre of the room and pointed to a bottle, hump-shaped and stunt-necked, that hung suspended from the ceiling on a grimy piece of string.

"Ye laugh at the Master's Curse, landlord," he said, "but ye keep his Luck, ye do. Ye keep his Luck. And years o' plenty have ye had. 'Ware lest the Luck falls. 'Ware, I say—ye whose eyes ha' lost their sight so that ye don't know *me*. I, the son o' the Master! I that was your friend. I who robbed for ye——"

The landlord's face was blue-white.

"Not that, Richard," he said, "Not that! Man, man, why didn't ye say? Why didn't ye say?"

"Because I didn't choose," said the tramp sullenly.

The man Betherden stared open-eyed. The intruder had drawn a high-backed chair up to the fire, and he stretched out his skimp legs upon which the rags of covering almost flapped.

"Now, landlord—George, my friend of the old times—a bottle of good wine I'll have with you. . . . A bottle of good wine for *me*—that ha' been glad of water these months past! Ah, well! Home at last! Back to the old haunts of boyhood's days. 'Misbegotten Son of a Wizard' ye used to call me—ye who weren't superstitious. But the Wizard's Luck still hangs high. An' the deed o' darkness was not done in vain. Sure, how is it the little Runic rhyme runs?

'Five degrees to West, and then
Keep the Tower within your ken;
Where the Bartle streamlet winds,
There is Luck for him that finds.
For, beneath the Deathman's Land
There shall lie the twisted Hand.'"

"Deathman's Land?" Mr. Betherden interrupted. "Why I farm those evil acres, and sure a blight has descended on 'em. Wha's all this about the 'twisted Hand'?"

"Mean to say George, our worthy landlord, ha' never told ye? Now, I should ha' thought that would ha' been somethin' he would ha' boasted about!"

The tramp darted a malicious glance at the ashen-faced Knowler.

"Doan't, doan't, Richard," groaned the landlord.

"Wha' d' ye mean!" Betherden interrupted.

"Boasted about"—the tramp paused—"boasted about getting the Deathman's Land off his hands," he added vaguely; the words did not ring true.

Didn't know as he ever had the Land," said Betherden.

"It was before your time," said the tramp. . . . "Yes, this is uncommon good wine, landlord."

"Was it good land when you had it?" asked Betherden of the landlord, persistently.

"Towards the latter part of the time it was *very* bad," said the landlord.

"But once upon a time it was as good a bit o' soil as there is in these parts," the tramp continued devilishly. "Before the Luck was taken away from ut," he added.

"What luck?" Betherden questioned again, kicking the fire into a blaze.

"Well, you see, it was like this," the intruder said, leering at the landlord. "Years and years ago——"

"Get out o' this!" The landlord sprang up. "Get out o' this before I murder ye, ye imp o' Satan, ye son o' Belial, ye!"

The man in rags rose.

"Fool, greatest of fools!" he hissed. "Beware lest the Wizard's Luck falls. A touch, and surely the bottle would smash into a thousand pieces. And then what would be revealed? *What* I say?"

Outside, the wind moaned and soughed through the trees. The windows rattled weirdly and the painted sign in front of the inn swung and creaked—swung and creaked.

Betherden of Deathman's Land rose from his chair. The landlord sat now with his face in his hands saying no word . . . simply shuddering. The knotted cords stood out on his forehead.

"Look ye," said Betherden. "I came here for a bit o' peace and quiet, *I* did. Not for all this here janglin'. If you too old schulemates want to jangle—why jangle and be damned to ye! I'm goin' home. This talk about 'twisted Hand,' too, gets into my head and I sha'n't sleep for fear o' the soopernatural."

"But if you're afeerd o' this man I'll stay, George," he said after a pause.

"No, go—go!" came from the huddled heap in the chair.

The ragged stranger drew his threadbare coat round him and raised a forbidding hand.

"You will stay, sir!" he said. "You will stay and hear the tale of a man who poisoned a father's heart against a son, who got that son turned adrift, who cared not if he starved. . . . Now the son of the old Wizard has returned to claim his own, or reveal this man for a familiar of witchcraft, and . . . a robber of the dead. And proof? Gad! You shall have proof! Proof from the Hand in the Bottle above. The Hand that held the Power——"

"Look here, I ha' had enough of this," said Mr. Betherden, slowly. "I don't know what ye're drivin' at, I'm sure. You're makin' yourself dev'lish unpleasant, I know that. Besides, you're upsettin' Mr. Knowler with all this rot about twisted hands in bottles and such things. It's nowt to do with me, anyway, so long as the beer's good, and there aren't any dead hands in *that*! As for the Wizard, he's been dead this thirty year—him that lived in the Old Mill—the Gooseberry Bottle they call it. I don't want to hear any further blarney, Mister! You stand aside, or it'll be the worse for you! So I've warned ye, and ye know. Now let me pass, I say!"

The man in rags raised his bony hands and his eyes fired.

"You—shall—not. You *cannot*," he hissed, fixing Betherden with his gaze.

"D'ye rackon you can mesmerise *me*!" said Betherden, "'cause this is the best argument against *that*!"

His fist shot out and caught the man fu'l on the mark, sending him crashing upon the crazy wooden table.

The lamp sputtered and went out, only the firelight blaze lit the room now, and upon the wall distorted shadows danced.

The stranger groaned, and the landlord looked fearfully on.

"Shall I chuck him out, Mr. Knowler?" asked the powerful Betherden, bloodthirstily.

"Beware the fall of the Wizard's Luck," said the man in rags, pointing to the bottle that hung from the roof. "Beware lest its breaking reveals the dead hand that I dug from beneath Deathman's Land. The hand that the Wizard charmed, and his son's friend stole——"

"Get out afore I smash ye again, you and your twaddle!" said Mr. Betherden, contemptuously.

"I'll go—I'll go. But beware——"

"Stow it now!" exclaimed Betherden warningly.

The man in the rags rose wearily, and staggered awkwardly across the bar. Suddenly he raised his arm, and smote the bottle with all his might.

The landlord, seated by the fire, buried his face in his hands and shrieked aloud in terror, as the bottle broke in a thousand pieces upon the floor.

Towards the squidgy brown pool on the bricks Mr. Betherden fearlessly extended an unimaginative hand, and drew from thence a dead, white—frog.

The tramp had disappeared. . . .

Mr. Betherden picked it up.

"There's nowt to be scairt about, George," he said. "It's nothin'—nothin' at all, I tell ye!"

The landlord made no reply.

"Here, wake up, man," said Betherden, lightly touching the landlord's forehead with the little spirit-preserved body. "Why, 'tis only a frog."

A shudder shook the fat shoulders . . . then a groan.

"Why—man!" Betherden pulled him up by the shoulder.

A glance at the glassy eyes told its own tale.

The man was dead.

FOOTBALL AS AN EXERCISE.

Football is universally admitted to be a capital spectacle, for no sport is more keenly watched, but a question occurs as to whether football is equally good as exercise.

Those who number many sportsmen amongst their acquaintances must know several who have tried playing football and have given it up.

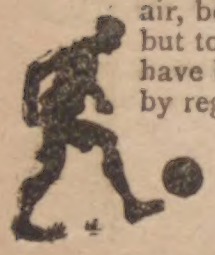
"I have not enough time for it, you know," is the usual explanation, but it is not a very convincing one, for this same man who has not time to play in a football match, yet finds time to watch one being played.

His explanation is not wholly wrong, however, for, although perhaps he does not realise the truth of what he is saying, but gives it as an easy explanation, one of the real reasons why the amateur with limited time seldom enjoys football is that he has not the leisure to keep himself in thorough muscular condition.

He may turn out each evening for a run, and he may go in for physical culture exercises morning and night, but if that be all the training he has for the football match on Saturday, he inevitably finds himself tired at the end of it; and recreation should not make a man tired except temporarily.

Football professionals are, of course, kept in condition, but the man who has to earn his living finds it almost impossible to keep himself fit for the game.

This goes largely to explain why so many of us watch football matches instead of playing in them. To watch a football match is a harmless form of amusement and one that keeps you in the fresh air, besides taking your thoughts away from work; but to play in one is not good for you unless you have brought yourself into the pink of condition by regular practice and training.



WHAT MEN SAY TO WOMEN

A CONFIDENTIAL TALK.

One of the comfortable fallacies which help to make the world go round is that the feminine temperament is inscrutable to men, and the masculine temperament clear as crystal glass to women.

It is mainly upon this foundation that the whole relationship between the sexes is built.

Yet it is far nearer the truth to assert that there is no greater understanding on the part of one sex than another. There is to be considered that one peculiarity of the character of the conversation between men and men which is always different from that between men and women. Despite all the acknowledged superior insight of the feminine mind women are altogether in the dark as to what men talk about among each other, and there is a sort of mutual understanding among men to see that they are never enlightened.

Of course, this is not a matter that would give pleasure to women if we admitted it.

Quite likely the young ladies who do me the honour of reading these lines will repudiate the statement, either indignantly or with that air of tantalising confidence, which it is their habit to assume when a mere man ventures to question the reliability of their intuitive faculty.

WOMAN THE MYSTERY.

Nowadays a man is considered to have taken the first step on the road to wisdom, when he will readily admit that the feminine personality is an insoluble mystery to him, and it is not for me to adopt an iconoclastic attitude towards this attractively modest belief.

Of course, men don't really believe it, but the pretence that they do is one of the most subtle compliments they pay to women, and it is a feather in our cap that woman, with all her acknowledged insight, accepts the flattery without a shade of suspicion.

It is just from this standpoint then that men mostly talk to women, and it is just because of this pretty deception in their conversation that women do not know how men talk to men.

In the presence of a woman or women men insensibly alter both the subject of their conversation and the sincerity with which they declare their views. They do not actually become more reticent, nor of necessity self-conscious. Rather than consciousness of self it is consciousness of that other disturbing creature who understands them so well that at all costs nothing must be said that she would find difficult to comprehend.

THE REAL DIFFERENCE.

Do not retort, dear ladies, that all this is because the subjects we choose are unfit for your ears. I assure you they very seldom are. The only difference you make to us is that of transforming an *impersonal* discussion into expressions of opinions in the first person singular. It would be surprising how much even the least vain of men will talk to you in the first person, did not all of us realise that a woman is far more interested in the man than his opinions.

For instance, if you, Madame, had the doubtful pleasure of being introduced to me, the shape of my nose, the colour of my eyes, would be of greater importance to you than the knowledge that I entirely disbelieve in the theory of evolution.

As a matter of fact there is an extraordinary amount of make-believe between the sexes.

The dashing young man leaning negligently against the bar and delivering indolent admiration of the lady behind is no more in earnest than is the lady when she affects cold indifference to his blandishments.

He is an uncommon sort of son who discusses his business plans with his mother, and an unusual brother who confides in his sister when he is in love.

In love, too, a man is astonishingly self-depreciatory towards the girl of his choice, but if he thought there was any likelihood of her believing him he would drop the pose like a hot brick.

Love, said Israel Zangwill, is a mutual make-believe; but he meant no sneer in saying it, and neither do I in repeating it.

Childhood is wrongly looked upon by sentimentalists as a period of unique happiness, but the real delight of childhood is its capacity for tingeing the commonplace with the hues of phantasy.

MAKE BELIEVE AND COUNTERFEIT.

So long as we retain the gift we are still young, and love, I make bold to tell you, is the most beautiful make-believe in the world.

It is the counterfeits of love which create the worst form of liars. What men say to women when they are making a pretence of the divine instinct constitutes the grossest form of deception. It is no unheard-of thing for a man whom experience has made expert in *affaires d'amour*, to make irresistible his plea by a repetition of the very phrases that he learnt from the lips of the first girl to whom he swore devotion.

There are things, too, said by men to women which are not very pleasant in substance, and it might come as something of a shock to the women if they were told that they were responsible more than the men.

FALSE WIT.

Yet it is unquestionable that the purity or otherwise of conversation rests with the woman. No man will go far with that veiled indecency which obtains among so many people as wit and smartness, when he discovers that it is objectionable to a woman.

There are many men of deservedly ill reputation whose behaviour when in the company of honourable women lacks nothing in delicacy. If anything, they are more sensitive than most to the atmosphere of virtue. The fact is nothing to their credit, but it goes to prove that the line in such matters is drawn by the woman.

Taking a summary, it may safely be said that what men say to women is what they think will please the women best.

But if the women get to know, they are far from pleased.

C. WOLFF.

PINS AT HAND.

A very useful habit for a man to adopt is to keep a pin, or even a couple of them, underneath the lapel of every jacket he possesses.

A pin comes in useful for many purposes.

To take an example, it sometimes happens that a seam in your jacket may give way—especially in these days when tailors do most of their sewing with machines; for such an emergency, a pin dexterously inserted will put the matter right for the time being.

The really wise man will have a black and a white safety-pin also behind the lapel of each of his coats. They do not show unless you turn your collar up, which, if you have any regard for the shape of your coat, you will never do.

INDOOR GARDENING

WHAT TO GROW, AND HOW TO GROW IT.

The dweller in town, for whose pet hobby the builder has not catered, having only provided a paved back-yard, can yet indulge his passion for gardening by having an indoor garden.

He need not go to the same extravagant length as a certain acquaintance of mine, who made his entrance hall into a perfect floral bower by planting creepers in large pots and then carefully training them along the walls.

But it is quite possible to grow any number of plants in pots, and to do well with them.

Ferns can be grown in a large glass case. This can be either bought or made to order, or manufactured at home.

If the latter plan is chosen, get tolerably thick glass, but free from imperfections.

It can be fixed into the frame like the panes in any ordinary window by means of putty.

The back should be higher than the front, so as to have a sloping roof, and be fitted with collapsible supports inside the lid to enable it to be left open a little so as to ventilate the case.

A zinc tray at the bottom for the pots to rest on is a good idea.

THE BEST POSITION.

The passage is perhaps the best place to keep the fern case, as ferns, except the very delicate species, do not require heat.

Hartstongue does well in a case of this sort, and there are several varieties of hardy ferns which yet are not common.

But the novice had better leave the delicate maidenhair alone, as it really only thrives in a hot-house.

Of course, those who go in for indoor gardening must eschew gas, as the fumes given off from even one small jet are absolutely poisonous to plant life.

For the ambitious amateur whose tastes incline to the flora of sunnier lands than ours, and who yet cannot attain to the height of luxury symbolised by orchid houses, there is the almost equally curious cactus family.

These can be easily bought from high-class florists or nurseries at pretty nearly all prices, from the strange variety known as "The Old Man" cactus, which varies in price from five shillings upwards, to tiny pots containing little shoots at something under a shilling.

CACTUS PLANTS.

These can be kept in a warm, dry room, but the more delicate kinds require a glass case, similar to the fern-case described above, only, of course, on a smaller and lighter scale.

A really interesting collection of these curious products of the vegetable kingdom can be got together at a comparatively small outlay, and they are not much trouble to look after.

The successful cactus fancier must, however, study his plants. And the golden rule to be observed with respect to them is to be sparing of the water.

Remember that the cactus is a native of the dry, arid plains of Mexico, and is accustomed to long periods of drought. Therefore only water them once a week in small quantities, and never by any chance stand the pots in a saucer of water, for many of them have little or no roots, and will rot.

The aloe does well in an ordinary living-room, and dwarf specimens can be obtained. It requires a little more water than the cactus.

There are other peculiar plants that the indoor gardener may add to his collection, for they do well in the house—the onion plant, for instance, or the egg plant. The latter is edible.

For the amateur who only cares for the familiar blossoms, there are any amount of bulbs which can be grown either in earth or water.

Hyacinths, tulips, crocuses, snowdrops — both the white one and what is known as the blue snowdrop or *Scylla Siberica* — all these make a fine show when in bloom, and are very little trouble.

It is not absolutely necessary to go to the expense of purchasing proper hyacinth glasses, for any shaped glass can be used for the bulb, provided there is some sort of a rim for it to rest on above the water.

For those who like out-of-the-way plants, there is the Joss lily, which grows well in a shallow dish filled with sand, or the Japanese water lily, which grows in water and throws up a sheaf of blossoms resembling small narcissus, which have a pleasant perfume. Lilies of the valley also may be grown in a bowl of earth.

Another interesting plant is that peculiar, dead-looking ball fantastically called "The Rolling Stone before the Whirlwind," or Rose of Sharon, which must be put in water, when it becomes green, and then unfolds and gives off a pleasant perfume. This plant is said to ward off sickness.

Then there is the "Monarch of the East," which requires neither sand nor earth nor water, but may be put on the mantelpiece, where it will thrive and bloom.

Roses do not lend themselves to indoor cultivation, and the geranium, though so great a favourite, is not to be recommended, for it is apt to grow weedy and be sparing of bloom in the hands of the inexperienced gardener. Indeed, it seems only to thrive in cottage parlour windows, which are never opened from one year's end to another, and in properly-managed greenhouses.

Before planting bulbs, get some really good mould from a nursery. You cannot expect them to thrive in sour, poor earth.

THE DIFFICULTIES OF MUSHROOM GROWING.

Amongst other things it is held to be possible to utilise the cellar—if you happen to have the right of use—to grow mushrooms there from spawn usually sold in the form of bricks; but from personal experience I should say it is by no means easy.

However, the ambitious novice can try the experiment for himself.

Indoor gardening has one advantage over outdoor, in that the insect pest is less to the fore.

If, however, the plants do suffer, the beneficent goddess Nicotine provides a remedy, and the nuisance will yield to tobacco smoke.

In cold, frosty weather plants of all sorts require very little water. The indoor gardener should also make a point of occasionally looking to see if any of his plants are pot-bound, and remedy this by transplanting them as soon as possible.

C. B. CORDERY.

PIPES.

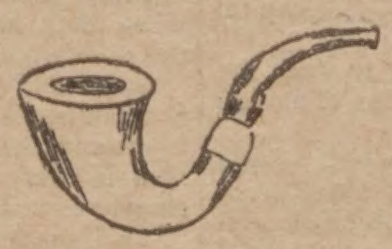
The man who never smokes anything but cigarettes does not know the possibilities of happiness and contentment until he takes to a pipe. Incidentally he does much less injury to his health.

The variety of pipes a man has to choose from nowadays is almost endless, and each has its own advantages as well as its drawbacks, and each has its own particular name, which in many cases is unknown to the man in the street.

Bent Army Pipe.

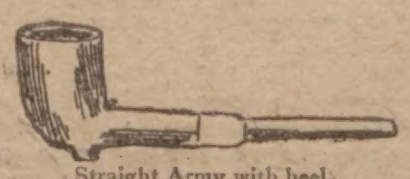
I am not concerned here with the grain of a pipe. The ideal is acknowledged to be a straight grain that runs from top to bottom of the bowl, but it is largely a matter of appearance—and of cost. I have had many pipes without a pretence to a good grain, from which I guarantee that I have derived as much enjoyment as if they were of the most perfect briar, and had cost ten times the amount.

The "briar" of which pipes are made has, of course, no connection, as is often supposed, with the briar rose. The word is simply a corruption of the French "*bruyère*," or heather, for the wood used comes from the roots and knots of the tree-heath which grows in the countries bordering on the Mediterranean, and which is of the same tribe as the heather that we know in our own islands.



Calabash.

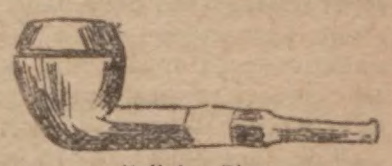
The extraordinary toughness and hardness of the wood and the closeness of its texture enables it to stand the heat of the burning tobacco without cracking. Even a briar pipe, however, is liable to crack if it is habitually knocked out on the bars of the grate or subjected to similar indignities. The man who is careful of his pipes will empty them with a pipe cleaner or an old knife, or will knock them out on his hand.



Straight Army with heel.

There are three main patterns of briar—the Army pipe, the bull-dog, and the French briar.

The Army pipe, which is made with straight or curved mouthpiece, is of a lighter type than the French. The silver mount, with which it is always fitted, is tapered, so that the mouthpiece is almost invariably "push-fitting," as it is called, and does not screw in.



Bull-dog Pipe.

That shown in the second sketch is one of the straight variety, fitted with a "heel"—an excrescence which is of very little practical use, unless the wood is so thin that you cannot hold the pipe by the bowl.

The "bull-dog" pipe is usually straight and is an excellent outdoor pipe. It will stand any amount of hard wear and owing to its shape is less liable to crack than the Army pipe.

The greater part of the stem and the mount are always square, and the mouthpiece is usually screw-fitting.

The French briar is usually of stouter wood than the Army pattern. The silver band, if there is one, is cylindrical, and the mouthpiece is also thicker, and tapers up to the thickness of the wooden stem.

It is usually made with a plug fitting, which is much handier and easier to clean, as well as less breakable, than a screw.

For the man who wants a long, cool smoke by his own fireside, there is nothing like a calabash lined with meerschaum.

These are made from the hard shell of a kind of gourd which flourishes in the tropics.

Straight French Briar.

J. B. WESTON.

TWELFTH NIGHT.

In most British households Christmas is signalised by the putting up of decorations of some sort, though a recent catastrophe has shown the danger that lurks in festoons of paper and cotton-wool and similar inflammable materials. Evergreens are *safer*, and in better taste.

There is a popular superstition, however, which is often disregarded, mainly because it is unknown, that it is unlucky to leave Christmas decorations up after Twelfth Night.

The average Englishman nowadays does not know when Twelfth Night is, for the fine old custom of observing the festival of Twelfth Day has practically disappeared since all our energies in the way of celebrations are concentrated on Christmas.

Twelfth Day is really the festival of the Epiphany, or the manifestation of Our Lord to the Gentiles at the visit of the Wise Men. It derives its name from the fact that it falls on January 6—the twelfth day after Christmas.

On Twelfth Night, therefore, which is the eve of the Epiphany, or January 5, it behoves all those who are superstitious to remove their Christmas decorations.

Those who are not superstitious will do well to do the same, for the decorations will by then have lost their freshness; and if they remain up long after the festival they celebrate, they become merely irritating to the visitor, though the inhabitants of the house themselves may have become used to them.

HOW TO DEAL WITH A HALTER-PULLER.

There are few more annoying tricks to which a horse can be addicted than that of pulling on his halter when tied up.

There are several ways of breaking him of this objectionable habit. One often practised is to put the halter rope through a ring—or it can be tied to the manger and the other end then tied to one of the horse's front feet.

But a still better plan is to get a rope about 19 feet long, double it in the middle, put the loop under the tail, and cross it over the back; put the ends through the nose-band and tie them to a good stout post—then go in front of the horse and endeavour to make him pull back. He will do this several times, but he soon sees through your device, and stops, and nothing will induce him to pull on that halter any more on that occasion.

Don't look upon him as cured in one lesson, for the horse has a short memory, but carry the rope along with you, and when you have to tie him up, tie him with the rope in the manner described.

This habit very often comes from a horse being badly broken in.

TIPS FOR ALL.

If you cycle much during the winter, keep a sharp look-out on your tyres. It is also a capital idea to fix on extra large mud-guards.

For a sprain, the best treatment is to wrap the limb up as quickly as possible in a piece of flannel wrung out of boiling water.

If you have an old cloth suit which wants cleaning, you will find good results obtained from using a mixture of fuller's earth, French chalk, and pipeclay, made into a paste with methylated spirit and turpentine.

Don't throw away old leather, even the tops of old boots come in handy, and a soldier's old belt makes a capital strop for sharpening tools or even razors.

If you go in for window-boxes and have not yet planted anything, get some wallflower roots and perhaps a few tulip bulbs, and you will have a fine show by-and-by, as well as a fragrant one.

The best way to use up old leaves is to burn them in the garden, as the ash makes an invaluable fertiliser if you go in for potting plants.

If you keep canaries, you will find that egg-shells dried in the oven and then powdered and mixed with the sand will be much appreciated by the birds.

WHAT OUR READERS HAVE TO SAY

Remember that if your horse gets scratched or torn with briars or even barbed wire out hunting, there is no remedy to beat cold water bandages.

There are times when one gets sick of the smell of tobacco. Just leave a bowl of water in your sitting-room overnight, and the smell will have vanished by morning.

IMPORTING YOUR SMOKE.

The man who smokes a good deal, and perhaps more especially the man who gives away a good many smokes, wants something that is good and at the same time moderate in price.

At one time I used to buy very expensive Turkish cigarettes that worked out well over a penny each, but now I get my smokes from a small firm in Cyprus, and, after paying the duty, they cost me only 33s. a thousand.

They are very good cigarettes, too, and the name of the firm imprinted upon them is obviously Greek, and quite different from the imprint that you would find on the smokes that you buy in this country.

This very fact lends an interest to the cigarette when you offer one to a man. It is not So-and-So, or Such-and-Such's best Turkish. It is something different, and something that he can see without being told has been imported.

I am considered a bit of a connoisseur in the matter of cigarettes, and I take credit for the fact because I manage to get them at a reasonable instead of at an inflated price.

I also keep a small stock of cigars for those of my friends who prefer tobacco in this form. These I buy from a firm which imports them direct from Holland.

In Holland you can buy a good cigar very cheaply, but the duty paid on ready-made cigars when they are imported into this country brings the price up considerably.

In spite of that, however, I find that by keeping a small stock of these Dutch cigars I can supply my friends, at about twopence a time, with a smoke that is every bit as good as what they would pay sixpence for in an ordinary London shop.

This method of buying smokes demands a certain amount of expenditure, for you buy the cigars by the hundred and the cigarettes by the thousand, and I do not recommend it to anybody unless he is a confirmed cigarette or cigar smoker himself, but to those who answer to either of these descriptions the method is one which not only secures good results, but also saves £. s. d.

A DRAMATIC CLUB.

Throughout the winter the leading spirits of the many tennis and cricket clubs in town and country are faced with the difficulty of finding some attraction to keep their members together until next year.

A good many clubs hold a weekly dance during the winter, but, as a rule, of the male members, only about half care about dancing, and the others look elsewhere for amusement.

Next to running whist drives, which means hard work and some risk for the organisers, a dramatic club is a safe attraction, and after the duties of formation have been completed the secretary has little or no work until the time approaches for the representation of the chosen play.

The subscription should be a small one, but each member must undertake to provide his, or her, own copy of the play, and the costume necessary for the performance. The hire of a room, large enough for rehearsals, should not be expensive, if it is only taken for three hours once or twice a week.

The choice of a play is a knotty problem for most dramatic clubs, but a free catalogue can be obtained from any theatrical publishers giving the necessary information as to class and period of the plays therein and the number of characters and scenes required. This should prove a great help in making a selection.

For amateurs, and especially for a first performance, a modern comedy should be taken, and it will be all the better if the action is laid indoors, for then nothing elaborate is required in the way of scenery, and the stage-management will be simplified.

After the play or plays have been chosen, the characters allotted, and understudies appointed for each of the principal parts (this matter is important—those understudying for the first performance should be given parts in the second play produced), the person appointed stage-manager should take full control of rehearsals, and members playing parts should recognise his authority. He will not have the easiest post to fill, as the would-be actors are very often aggravating and unreasonable, but having formed his own opinion of how the play should be acted, he should stick to his guns quietly but firmly.

A gentle hint or two for the performers:

Speak your part slowly and clearly, and sound all your consonants. It will not be necessary to shout if you do this.

Deep-breathing exercises are excellent for strengthening the voice, and should be practised every morning for ten minutes after rising.

Never anticipate your "cue"—to do this is worse than missing it altogether.

TABLE GOLF.

For those who don't care about the outdoor game, seeing no fun in walking miles to the links, which are windswept and desolate enough in this weather, this one of the least hackneyed of parlour games may be recommended.

Everyone has known table croquet and tennis, and grown tired of their tameness, but table golf has some of the fascination which belongs to the royal and ancient game.

It has another advantage, that the novice can perfect himself in the parlour, with its cheerful atmosphere and cosy fire, almost as well as on the green.

The sets can be bought at varying prices, the game can be played on an ordinary dining-room table, and the scoring is the same as for outdoor play.

The more expensive sets include the proper complement of clubs, &c., but the small sets have bunkers for the ball to go over, and putting greens, and it is quite possible to play a decent game with them.

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The first prize this week goes to Mr. A. T. Belton, "Saba," Leighton Avenue, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, for "A Dramatic Club."

COMPLETE SHORT STORY.

TROOPER KERNAHAN'S CAPTAIN

By JOHN HILARY GARRATT.

And then the ugly bullets come
a-peckin' through the dust,
And no one wants to face 'em, but
every beggar must.

—KIPLING.

I.

In the chilly coolness of the asphalt-floored Drill Hall at Brermouth the members of "B" Squadron of the King's Own Royal Regiment Blankshire Yeomanry stamped about in ordered time at the dismounted drill swing.

A motley crowd sat upon, or lounged against, a khaki-coloured field-gun that occupied a corner, and ever and anon they indulged in remarks, complimentary and otherwise.

Now to march before a multitude is a simple matter, but it requires a strong mind to put aside self-consciousness under the critical gaze of the few. Hence the internal discomfort of Squadron, "B."

Old Pat—only the Paymaster knew his real name—cleaner of rifles, receiver of insults, sweetened later by beer money, and now leather-aproned and greasy, had tried in vain to clear off the loungers by the field gun.

One of those legs of his that had carried him over the desert sand and the Afghanistan hills had given it up at last and succumbed to more than a touch of rheumatism. The loungers knew his limitations, and hesitated not to take full advantage of them. One cannot chase an army of ragged but healthy loungers many times round a field gun when one is handicapped by stiffened joints. So Pat followed the example of his leg, and gave it up at last, also.

His little work-table in the corner held many weird tools besides pull-throughs and greenish yellow oil. With these he did wondrous things to rifles whose barrels, sights, bolts, and general mechanism were filled with sand from the Brermouth open range. It was his great enemy now—this sand.

Thus it was only very occasionally that he cast an eye on the drilling troop. Yet in that eye a certain qualified satisfaction usually glimmered.

He went on with his work again. . . . But in his ears rang the short, sharp words of command of Captain Devine, and ever the troop responded with creditable smartness.

The line was split into sections, half-sections, and file; half-righted, and flung back into line or formed into troop at the double. They were cavalry commands worked out on foot for the benefit of the recruits. That drill was peculiar for its Irish action. The hall was very cold, and the men were doing their best to keep themselves warm. (Trooper Carteret, in fact, had not less than three waistcoats on, under his undress frock.)

The Sergeant-Major was at the head of a troop, keeping the youngest of them at it.

Pat, having satisfactorily cleaned a rifle—Carteret's—that seemingly contained half Brermouth beach, permitted himself the luxury of an idle moment to watch in animation his Captain Devine. He had seen him before, under less peaceful circumstances.

Then, some thousands of Afghan tribesmen were amusing themselves by amateurishly potting at a certain Forlorn Hope under one, Lieutenant Devine, a subaltern of Her Majesty's Indian Army. The luck of amateurs, however, is proverbial. Crack shots are liable to miss; clumsy amateurs aim at one man and hit another. The disadvantage lies in being the other. It is truly horrible to face death by mere accident, and succumb to the blundering luck of an untrained potter. It robs the whole thing of such patriotic satisfaction as it contains at other times.

Captain Devine's voice rang out loud and clear, and half awoke Pat from his reverie.

It was the same incisive tone that had echoed over those hills aforetime, urging on the men to daring things.

Somehow Pat's thoughts travelled to that memorable occasion, and, further, to that brother-lieutenant of Devine's. That day each man was a hero of sorts.

Therefore, Devine's brother—the elder—may be considered to have been let down lightly, for he had simply hidden behind a boulder.

The penalty for cowardice in actual warfare is uncomfortable, but P. Harriston Devine had merely received a cashiering from the authorities, and the nickname of "The Man Who Stayed Behind" from the rank and file. His brother, who was a captain in the Blankshire Yeomanry now, had mentioned casually at the time that he would far rather have seen him fall than return to cantonments alive—and a coward branded plainly. The regiment knew of this. The next thing the regiment learned was that Lieutenant Devine, the elder, had gone, no man knew whither.

Pat heard the word of command again and saw the Yeomen drawn up in a line, pending the "dismiss." It brought him back to the present day. All the rest was in the long ago.

It was the last drill of the old year. Captain Devine, who carried his arm in a sling owing to a recent accident, relaxed his men to the "stand easy," and in the authoritative yet kindly tone that made men work for him cheerfully, he briefly touched on the little triumphs, the little failures, the little mistakes that go to make up anyone's year besides a Yeoman's—cups won, cups lost, badges gained, the matter of the regimental shooting average and such-like things did he mention, with a word of praise here and a note of kindly criticism there, but no matter. The indifferent performances would have to be improved, the good results even bettered.

Old Pat had heard something like this before from the same man.

He had been commissioned on that occasion to echo the sentiments of their colonel, who was indisposed. He had, however, put his own personality into it quite unconsciously. It carried more weight, perhaps, than the word of the colonel. Even at that time Devine could weigh up the form of men and train his guns accordingly. It was not etiquette for the rank and file to say "Thank you, sir," but they felt it when he had finished. Pat remembered this. In addition, it was a creditable performance for a man whose very brother had blighted the old year and bade fair to darken the first sun of the new.

Darken the first sun of the new! That's how Lecky of the "All Pinks" had put it, and Lecky had a turn for soulful descriptive.

"All very long ago . . . all very long ago," thought Pat, "and I ain't gettin' younger."

"Now—men—it only remains for me to wish you with all my heart a prosperous New Year!" said Captain Devine.

"And the same to you, sir!" exclaimed a recruit, stung into forgetfulness by his Captain's oration.

Some brother recruits tittered, and the loungers by the field gun roared—save one.

Momentarily the Captain turned an idle glance upon them. Then he started slightly, and turned to the troop.

"'Tention! Dismiss!" he said, after a pause, and as a man in a dream.

Kernahan, catching up his sword, after the usual easy marching style, strode across the hall.

Devine intercepted him, caught his arm, and half whispered to him.

"Follow the man who is just leaving the hall—man in a brown Trilby, Colonial cut. Come back and report to me where he goes. Wait for nothing!"

At the same moment Pat, cleaner of rifles, dropped a precious Lee-Enfield bolt on the floor and gasped.

II.

Now the Old Town of Brermouth is so burrowed with "rows" and side alleys that it is only by the greatest mischance that a harassed debtor is ever unfortunate enough to meet a pressing creditor—unless he happens to be short-sighted. One may dive down these ancient and weird passages and be lost to public view very swiftly.

Kernahan never realised quite how swiftly until twenty minutes casting about for the man in the brown Trilby hat had proved utterly fruitless.

He found his Captain in the officers' mess entertaining old Pat—of all people in the world. Pat was doing himself immensely well on hot whisky and saluting upon an average every ten seconds.

"Perfect certain? I was that, sir. If that wasn't Mr. P. Harriston Devine whom (I beg your honour's pardon) I can't very well help remembering, then I'll—I'll drink all the oil I've got in stock."

Pat swallowed the remainder of his be-lemoned whisky and regretfully surveyed the empty glass.

Kernahan was crestfallen.

"I'm sorry, sir," he began, "but—"

"Say no more. He dodged you? From what I've heard I believe he's got used to that." Captain Devine smiled grimly at his right hand man.

"Good-night Pat . . . and Good-night Trooper. And thanks very much."

Captain Devine picked up his gloves and his thick ash stick.

"Er—Trooper—."

"Sir."

"Have a drink—help yourself. But I must be off. So I wish you the usual."

"And the same to you, sir," said Pat, including himself in the convivial proceedings.

Kernahan paused.

"If I could be of any use to you, sir," he began.

"N—no. Pat will explain, and I know I can trust you to keep it to yourself. Good-night!"

"Good-night, sir!"

"Now, Patrick," said Trooper Kernahan, "the lead's in your hand. Who *is* the man in the brown Trilby, et cetera?"

"Why," said Pat, "he—mark you—was the Man Who Stayed Behind!"

Patrick wiped his oily hands upon his apron and proceeded with the painful story of the coward who would not advance with his brother and his men, holding his life dearer than honour.

"It was the bad streak in him. I saw it then, Mr. Kernahan. Sure an' its followed him through these many years. I ha' seen an' heard. I kin keep me blinkers skinned without opening my mouth to fill other people's. What a man does in war, and mebbe in love, is excusable. His blood runs warm. But a man that works and works to get a paltry revenge on a man who has called him the coward he is (and furthermore he knows himself that he is a coward of the most unforgivable sort) well, well, he works in cold blood, and none can uphold him.

"That's what this Mr. Harriston Devine is—him that's brother to our Captain—a brave and good man. I tell ye he wouldn't stop at—at anything. I heard things, I did. I that was a private soldier in those days, and am on a pension o' fourpence a day now—to keep me in monkey-nuts I suppose. Times change . . .

times change." The old man was mumbling over the whisky.

"Men come and go, but Pat, me bhoy, here's wishin' ye luck, and may ye never forget the British Army which sported your young blood and now sets you down to clean its rifles!"

Kernahan shook Pat's shoulder.

"Wake up, man!" he said. "Do you think this chap means any harm to our Captain?"

"Think? I know. Didn't I tell ye?"

"Well, well, why the devil," Kernahan blazed up, "why the devil are you sitting down here——"

"Captain can see after himself," said Patrick, comfortably.

"But supposing this Harriston Devine follows him to that lonely bungalow place of his? Why he might attack him, and God knows what. Brotherly hate is just about the worst thing in the world. Don't you know that? And what chance has he with his injured arm?"

"Just bet ye half-a-crown," said Pat, "that this Harriston hasn't got the pluck. Once a coward always a coward. Take me?"

He got no answer, for Trooper Kernahan was out of the Drill Hall's side door ere he looked up. Under his coat was the peak cap of a captain of the Blankshire Yeomanry.

III.

Trooper Kernahan strode swiftly along the Brermouth High Street, and made with all possible haste for the South Downs. Yet, far back from the cliff's edge was the bungalow rented by Captain Devine, who was tended always by a faithful Indian servant.

Cutting into the darkness beyond the termination of the tram lines, Trooper Kernahan broke into a run, and did not pause until he came upon the rise beneath which the "Nilghai Bungalow" nestled.

A light burned in the dining-room, it was evident. Trooper Kernahan noticed it glinting through the ragged shrubbery.

From this point he stole along cautiously, and with the stealth of a Pathan. The broken ground and the gorse patches afforded cover.

He skirted the grounds of the house by the back fencing, and after some little trouble dropped over almost noiselessly.

Keeping close to the wall, he stole round to the front of the bungalow. The moon rose over the sea that thundered restlessly below the cliff. And Trooper Kernahan thanked the gods for this mercy, for it covered the sound of his footsteps.

He paused to consider things. Now the light in the dining-room practically proved that Captain Devine was within doors. What of the "Man Who Stayed Behind"?

Kernahan stole round by the clump of tall shrubbery opposite the door. He peered into the darkness thereof even to the weeping willow, then passed on, whistling gaily, to the door of the bungalow, upon which he knocked loudly, grafting almost imperceptibly to the uncultured ears the Yeomanry whistle upon the bars of the refrain.

He heard a quick "All right. Open the door."

It was Devine's voice, and the permission proved that he was prepared for emergencies.

"Is Captain Devine in? I want to speak to him," said Trooper Kernahan. He had, however, long ago perceived the Captain through the side of the bay window, the blind of which was up.

The Indian servant salaamed him into the presence of his master.

Captain Devine was smoking. He looked at the clock.

"You've come five minutes earlier than I expected, Kernahan," he said, blandly. "You must have hurried, or Pat was unusually quick in giving you the details."

Kernahan still stood framed within the doorway.

"Call your man," he said, firmly.

Devine touched a bell. The Indian appeared silently.

"Well?" said Devine to Kernahan.

"Tell him to lower that blind," said the Trooper.

Captain Devine gave his instructions in mixed dialect.

The servant moved as silently away.

Trooper Kernahan crossed the room and removed his forage cap.

"Take a seat, my boy," said Captain Devine, pushing over his tobacco-jar, "and tell me the reason for lowering that blind."

"Less chance of your being shot," said Trooper Kernahan, quietly. He filled his briar and reached for a match.

Captain Devine leaned forward.

"You mean——" he said, in a hoarse whisper.

"Certainly," said Trooper Kernahan, "outside in the shrubbery. I saw the moonlight shine on his revolver. Wonder he didn't twig me. Only thing to do was to whistle, and appear unconscious of his presence altogether."

"I see," the Captain said. "A revolver! Poor fool, poor fool!"

"And is yours loaded?" Trooper Kernahan asked, indicating an army Colt on the mantelpiece.

"Yes," said the Captain. "Always is—for burglars and such like. Why?"

"If you *don't* mind," said Kernahan—and removed the six cartridges.

"What's that for?" asked the Captain.

"Oh! there's too much melodrama about this. It's a sordid age, and your brother—sorry, sir!—is trying to act the heavy."

Trooper Kernahan carefully laid down his briar, and took the officer's cap from his cloak pocket.

"Let's see," he said, "there's a big yellow collar to the officers' cloaks, isn't there? . . . Yes, you d better lend me yours. The disguise will be more complete."

"What the deuce do you mean?" Captain Devine questioned, amazed.

"Nothing, except that this matter can't wait over any longer, this man must be brought to his senses."

"Good heavens, you don't think I'm going to let you go out and risk——"

"Risk your grandmother. I'll bet my boots he's a funk. In any case we—that is the Squadron generally—aren't going to risk you! It won't take much to frighten a Man Who Stayed Behind."

"I shall not permit it, Trooper Kernahan!" The Captain's tones rang clear and purposeful.

"But *you* can't tackle him with *your* arm!—It's a good fist in his jaw that *he* wants, and argument after! You never lose anything by getting the first blow in. Hit first and hit hard, y'know, sir. Dashed good motto!"

"In this case, it isn't your business to do the hitting, my boy," said Captain Devine, gently.

"No, but I can be the intermediary third person incidentally. I'm going out——"

"You'll do nothing of the sort."

"Very well, we'll ask your brother in, sir—if I may suggest it."

"A madman with a revolver!" exclaimed the Captain. "Why, even now——"

"What's that?" Trooper Kernahan sprang up sharply. There was a sound outside.

"Get your chair out of range," he said, suddenly. "I'm going to fling up the window!"

He stood aside and pulled up the venetian blind. Then boldly opened the side window.

"Mr. Devine!" he called into the blackness of the night. "Mr. Devine!"

There was no answer.

"If you come within conversational range, I give you my word of honour that we shall not shoot—unless you do!"

"Come outside unarmed, and I'll speak to you; and I give you my word there'll be no harm done," said a voice from the shrubbery.

"No, thanks," said Kernahan, tersely.

"Then why should I take your word?"

"Because you *know* it's reliable."

"Curse you for that!" said the voice from the bushes. The shot had gone home. There was a pause.

"I'll come," said the voice at last.

"Sensible man," Trooper Kernahan commented.

"You'll find the door open and you've got our word of honour."

"The door?" exclaimed Captain Devine, in parenthesis.

"Certainly," said Trooper Kernahan. "This matter must be amicably settled, and if you'll take my advice, sir, I *think*——"

"Well, p'r'aps you're right," said the Captain at length. "It means eliminating years of personal threats on one side and hard feeling on another—for a man who was deficient in courage."

Trooper Kernahan flung open the door.

"This way; follow the light, Mr. Devine," he called.

The man in the brown Trilby entered, to find Kernahan smoking peacefully, and his brother staring fixedly before him.

Kernahan produced the Colt from his pocket.

"I should suggest dropping these little toys, sir," he said. "Put yours down first."

"Why should *I*?"

"Again, because you *know* you can trust us. . . . In the centre of the table. Thank you."

Kernahan placed the Colt by the side of the stranger's revolver.

"Well," said the stranger to his brother.

As the Captain looked up, the clock on the mantelpiece struck twelve.

The three listened in silence.

"Brother," said the Captain, slowly. "I wish you a Happy New Year!"

Kernahan, between, watched the unwonted moisture gather in two pairs of grey eyes.

"I was a coward and a fool," said the Man Who Stayed Behind. "When there's another war I'll go out as a trooper, and prove——"

Kernahan rose and pressed the bell. Incidentally he picked the revolvers off the table.

"What's that for, Trooper?" queried the Captain.

"I want the man to show me to the gate. I came over the wall," said Trooper Kernahan, smiling. "Besides, you must tell him to——"

"You're right. To prepare a room for my brother; who stays to-night," said the Captain. "In the morning we begin a new and brighter year. . ."

Kernahan followed the man through the open door. The bells of Brermouth were ringing in the New Year.

THE ART OF APOLOGISING.

One of the arts that may almost be reckoned as lost is the art of making a delicate apology.

Too often people endeavour to explain instead of apologising at all. They have inadvertently put someone to inconvenience, and that someone hauls them over the coals about it. They know that they have caused trouble, and they are genuinely sorry for having done so; but they endeavour to set matters right by explaining.

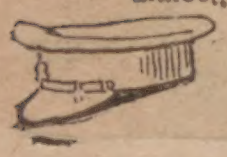
An explanation of this kind amounts almost to an argument, and an argument is always dangerous. Immediately there is aroused in the other party a desire to combat the explanation and to show that it is not satisfactory, and so the little trouble may develop into a big one.

When, on the other hand, a man says "I *am* so sorry," the person who is complaining is promptly disarmed. Instead of feeling resentment, he in turn becomes sorry—sorry that he has given the other additional pain by drawing his attention to his grievance.

And it is all due to the simple little apology.

There are some men who consider that an apology should never be made, and that it indicates an element of weakness in a man's character. It is true that in business it is frequently advisable for a chief to maintain silence, even if he knows he has been in error, for with some employees the acknowledgment of an error means means the end of all discipline and respect; but in private life it is very different.

The man who is always putting his foot in it, and from whom apologies are constantly necessary, is not here under discussion. There are times, however, when each of us, even the most diplomatic and best mannered, does something that upsets someone else, and in this there lies an opportunity not only for putting the matter right but also for the firmer cementing of friendship, for the making of a brief and sincere apology, and the equally cordial acceptance of it, draws friends closer together.



THE EVOLUTION OF A GENTLEMAN

A SKETCH.

"We have had any number of stories dealing with the descent of a gentleman, so suppose we vary the theme and have the ascent instead—more difficult, maybe, but just as possible."

So spoke Major Dent, looking round at his assembled guests.

There was a cosy fire burning in the great open fireplace of the Major's favourite lounge, half hall, half smoking-den.

Christmas was over and gone, but the holly and ivy wreaths still reminded of the festive season.

Every man's pipe was alight, every man's liquid refreshment was close to his elbow.

We nodded approval.

The Major was a born spinner of yarns, but for all that it was seldom that we could get him to talk. It's the way with good talkers; even their most intimate foes have no chance to grow weary.

"The man whose life story I purpose giving you," the Major began, "first opened his eyes in a country workhouse on a certain rainy day in the early part of a certain year, his mother having arrived there the previous evening.

"She departed a little later, leaving her child to the tender mercies of the parish nurse and the State feeding-bottle.

"His father? Oh! the usual little episode. The bar sinister in these days seldom carries with it any other privilege than birth in one of the public institutions.

"Brought up in the way peculiar to workhouse brats, he reached the age when the benevolent guardians look out for someone to whom to apprentice the young hopeful.

"In this instance their choice fell on a saddler—perhaps because work is slacker in that trade than in others.

"He served his term, and at the end found himself with a trade at his finger-ends, but no one to employ him.

"A fine strapping lad he was—a good six feet in height, and broad in proportion.

"Before he had time to loaf around and lose his self-respect, a man with a clerical collar and a hat broad enough for a halo got hold of him.

"Found he had brains, and what was of more use to the parson, a nice tenor voice.

"So he sang in the choir, and he learnt a lot from that clergyman—more than he ever knew.

"The parson ran one of those lads' clubs. He was great on muscular religion, you know, and in his gym. the chap learned the art of self-defence, and a few other things that proved mighty useful to him afterwards.

"But the life grew too tame, and he enlisted. The blood of fighting ancestors flowed in his veins—even if it got there by roundabout currents that are not down on the chart society uses.

"War gave him the chance he needed, and it wasn't long before he got his stripes.

"Gad!" The Major paused and drained his glass—"he could handle men. His mother had been a pit-brow lassie, and he had all the picturesque language that only the Black Country breeds at the tip of his tongue.

"At this period he wasn't quite fit for a lady's drawing-room, but he was a man, every inch of him!

"He didn't care for petticoats, and the black wenches didn't run away when he approached, as they did before his brethren in arms—that's to his credit, anyhow.

"He made a grand figure in uniform, and he was quite as good to look at in Service kit, which can't be said for the ruck of our Tommies, more's the pity.

"It was a sight worth seeing when he knocked out the champion heavy-weight and bully of the regiment in the sixth round, I can tell you.

"Then the usual came into his life. You know, you fellows, what I mean — the woman who makes or mars us—and she put the finishing touches to the evolution.

"Hopeless, of course, from the first, and he knew it; but, hang it all, it is the woman we never possess that makes us believe in her divinity.

"He performed several feats of bravery after this, and it began to be rumoured that he was bound to get a commission sooner or later.

"When he got it, there wasn't a man in the regiment but thought he deserved it, for the men adored him, and no officer worthy of the name could have done aught but respect him.

"None save one, and he was a cad, for all he owned a title and belonged to a Norman House.

"He started talking of origins one idle afternoon, and somewhat pointedly asked questions of one or two of the younger men.

"'Where was your birthplace?'

"'Oh! mine,' came the answer carelessly from the ex-ranker, 'was —— Workhouse.'

"There was a silence in which, perhaps, we all felt ashamed, except the new-made officer and the bounder.

"He got the V.C. after—under more than ordinarily chivalrous circumstances, for the man he rescued was the one who had sneered at his origin. He lived to be grateful, and to acknowledge that even a workhouse can breed a man!

"As time went on, there was no need for him to remember the beginning of his life, and certainly no one would dream of recollecting it who looked at the grand face and the splendid figure that looked well even in civilian dress.

"There was that well-bred air, too, about him that marks the gentleman." The Major paused to light his pipe. "Well?" An impatient chorus assailed him.

"What became of him?" the Major asked smiling. Then he resumed.

"If this wasn't a true tale, I should either end it with wedding bells or take you in spirit to a foreign grave. Instead I shall do neither, for he is alive and a bachelor. I believe he was asked to stand sponsor for the first son of that very lady who had been his Madonna—just one of life's little ironies. He's at the top of his profession now—a pillar of the Service.

"Suppose we drink his health, gentlemen?" After that ceremony was concluded, the Major was again assailed with questions.

"He is —— and you dine with him to-morrow night, and after meeting him you will be able to give me your verdict on the evolution of a gentleman."

"Bah!" said the cynic of the party. "He was a gentleman all the time." A. M. STEWART.

BARGAINS.

Many bargains—of exactly the type a man wants—are to be found on page 3 of cover.

If you don't see what you want, insert an advertisement of your own. It need not cost you more than a shilling.

CHOOSING A HUNTER.

POINTS WORTH REMEMBERING FOR THE HORSE-OWNER.

In choosing a hunter, there are three things to be considered—the sort of country you are going to hunt him over, the weight he will have to carry, and the price you are disposed or able to give for him.

Don't run away with the idea that you are bound to get a flier if you bid high enough, for that is well nigh as misleading as the notion that you can pick up a paragon for a song, if you know where to look.

A good horse is neither dear nor cheap, and a bargain in horse flesh usually turns out, like the remnants of silk and chiffon which our wives will buy at big sales of millinery, a worthless encumbrance.

A man who knows what he wants and what he means to give, and who takes the trouble to look for it, can always find it, unless he happens to be a very unlucky chap indeed.

A great authority gave it as his advice that when a man could not trust his own judgment he should commission a friend to make the purchase.

Well! personally I should not care to be that friend. Buying a horse for another man is about on a par with choosing a wife for him; both tasks are fraught with grave dangers and bristling with unpleasantnesses.

When viewing a likely animal, the first thing to be done is to examine his feet. If these are faulty, reject him, though he may be an Admirable Crichton of a steed.

He must stand true, and his feet should be large and perfect, the shoulders well back, pasterns long but oblique, short back with stout loins and wide hips.

A hunter should have a broad chest, and above all he should have a small head, and be as near thoroughbred as you can get him.

Now for his paces. It is not very likely that the owner will let you have a hunter on approval. Warranties are out of fashion, and after all were only open doors to much woeful litigation. A vet.'s certificate is about all you can reasonably hope to get, and the horse's vices you must take, like his virtues, on trust.

But most men will allow an intending purchaser to see his future mount over a fence or two, as well as trotting, walking, and galloping.

One famous rider was wont to say that he did not mind a slow hunter, so long as he'd try everything he was put to.

True enough, for a horse that won't try is a poor thing. But, personally, I think a fast horse is a much pleasanter mount.

If your horse is a poor hand at a fence, give him a little schooling on your own. It is easy enough if you have patience, and unless he is a cowardly brute, he will end by taking his fences like a good 'un.

If after all your care and faithfully following all the good advice given you by interested and disinterested parties, you do choose a bad 'un, give him a fair trial and then part with him to a friend.

Don't forget that in many instances it is the good rider that makes the good hunter. The finest horse that ever was foaled may be in the hands of some men a ghastly failure.

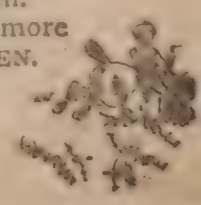
And if you happen to be a sorry horseman, don't buy off a crack rider and expect the horse to perform the same feats with you on his back.

A horse's intelligence may be and is very much overrated, but take my word for it—he knows the difference between—let us say—a Bay Middleton and you.

As regards the country you intend to hunt over, Warwickshire is a severe one, and tries a horse pretty hotly. For clayey, damp, marshy districts you should choose the short-legged, compact horse. This hunter has an advantage also for hilly districts.

For Leicestershire, that grand old wiseacre, Dick Christian, liked 'em lengthy and short-legged, not more than fifteen-three hands high.

For all purposes a hunter should not be more than sixteen hands. T. W. GARDEN.



WHERE MEN FORECATHER

XLV.
CARSEBRECK.

"Carsebreck"—the name to Southern ears may sound harsh and uncouth, and to the majority of dwellers south of the Tweed it will suggest nothing, but to the dweller on the Scottish side of the Border, it suggests at once the scene of one of the most genuine sporting events it is possible to witness.

Carsebreck is the name of a pond belonging to the Royal Caledonian Curling Club, situated amongst the hills several miles north of Stirling, and it is there (when weather conditions permit) that the devotees of the "roarin' game" of curling forgather to play their annual bonspiel between the North and South of Scotland, the Forth and Clyde Canal being the dividing line.

On the last occasion on which this match was played there were upwards of 3,000 curlers and spectators on the ice.

The curlers were drawn from all parts of Scotland, and from "all sorts and conditions of men," for there is no aristocracy on the ice. Here a noble lord may be playing alongside one of the ploughmen on his own estate, and there a minister and coachman may be skipped by some aged miner whose stentorian "soop her up, man," may be heard all over the pond.

FLATTERY.

At times, of course, the sycophant may appear, but he gets little encouragement, and generally meets with the fate of one who thought it his duty to praise the play of a certain nobleman, who was playing on the same rink, by hailing every stone his lordship threw as a good one.

At last to one shot of his lordship's, which had *not* done what the skip wanted, the flatterer cried, "Oh, that's a guid yin ma' lord! Weel curled, ma' lord!"

"Never heed him, ma' lord," cried the skip—his lordship's ploughman, by the way. "He's a damned leear. It's no' curled ava!"

Nor is there any recognised garb for the curling fraternity, and each man is a law unto himself as to what clothes he shall wear. Knickers of prodigious width, clothing the sturdy limbs of gamekeepers, are plentiful. Up-to-date breeches of the latest London cut are affected by the younger scions of nobility.

Men are there with trousers short and trousers long, trousers wide and trousers narrow, and some without any trousers at all, for numbers of the North Country players are arrayed in kilt and sporran.

WHAT THE SPECTATOR SEES.

On looking down on the pond from one of the adjacent heights, one is struck by the continuous motion of the crowd on the ice. No one seems to be at rest, and the babel of voices helps to make one wonder if there is any method about the thing at all.

On coming nearer to the players chaos becomes order, for the players are arranged in lines with spaces between them, through which the crowd of spectators (mostly on skates) moves.

The best of humour prevails everywhere, and the onlooker, who as usual sees most of the game, does not have far to look for amusement.

The instruction of the "skips" to their players is as a rule well worth listening to. For instance, an enthusiastic skip was instructing some player far above him in worldly station, and was the very essence of respect until carried away by excitement.

His instruction consequently sounded something like this: "Soop (sweep), if ye please, my lord"; "Soop, my lord, soop"; "Soop, man, soop!" "Soop, ye devil, soop!"

The "sooping" is done to help the stones to their destination, and the besoms used for the sweeping are of all sorts and sizes. Here a beautiful silver-mounted and monogram-engraved one will be plied vigorously alongside one which has seen its best days in the humble cottage of some lowly cottar, and a number of curlers turn up with besoms—which *are* besoms — having made them for themselves by tying twigs of broom together with string.

While there is at the present day so much outcry about professionalism in sport, it is pleasant to turn to a game in which all classes meet as equals, and in which professionalism is absolutely unknown.

THOROUGH AMATEURS.

All the players engaged in the big match have to pay their own expenses, from whatever part of Scotland they come, and have also to provide refreshments for themselves while there. No gate-money whatever is charged, and spectators have the run of the whole pond except, of course, the rinks.

Another peculiarity of the match is that nearly two hours elapse after the finish of the match before the result is officially known, and by that time nearly all the players are wending their way homewards to cottage or mansion, town or country, and really caring little who has lost or won.

For after all, as I heard one old player remark when asked who had won the match, "I dinna ken, but it's been a graund game, and my rink was three shots up."

A. R. SCOTT.

BINDING PAPERS.

When you happen to strike a periodical that you like, you feel that you want to preserve the various numbers.

Obviously the best plan is to have them bound by an ordinary bookbinder. For twenty-six copies of such a paper as this, he would charge you about 2s. or 2s. 6d.

The question of expense, however, is a matter of moment to many who may yet desire to preserve a periodical, and they do not care to go to a bookbinder; it is for their benefit that the following hints are given:

The simplest form of binding possible is to take two strips of wood, about the size and thickness of a penny ruler, and to bore a hole about two inches from the ends of each.

Pile your papers one on top of another, and with a bradawl bore a couple of holes through them close to the back.

Lay one piece of wood underneath the paper and one on top, and pass a piece of string or a wire through the top strip of wood, down through the papers, along beneath the lower strip, up through the papers again, and then tie the two ends.

Special care must be taken in boring the holes, both in the wood and in the papers, to see that they come directly in one line.

You will find it difficult to bore a hole through more than half a dozen papers at a time, and you will secure the best results by taking them in batches of this number.

If you are handy with your tools you might carve, or make in fretwork, a neat cover to go above and below the papers. Failing this, a piece of pasteboard will be sufficient to give your volume strength and also to keep the papers clean.

TIBBS'S NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS,

AND HIS METHOD OF KEEPING THEM.

Tibbs is a champion at making good resolutions. If he only kept one-half of them he would be in a fair way to becoming a saint, would Tibbs.

He makes a fresh list each year. I have known him well for many years, and he's no better now than he was when I first came across him, in spite of all those resolutions.

But then the fact is that before the New Year's a couple of months old he's broken the whole lot.

He is his own iconoclast, is Tibbs. He lets the old year out with sorrow for twelve months' misdeeds, and lets in the new with over much uplifting of spirit—not to mention indulgence in the spirit that is stored in glass vessels—possibly if Tibbs omitted this part of the ritual he might stand a better chance of adhering to his resolutions.

Here is a sample of his work in this direction.

"Resolve to overcome my evil temper."

Landlady at this moment knocks at the door with Tibbs's shaving water.

Tibbs forgets his resolution instanter. "If that old hag can't bring hot water, why the ——— does she bring any at all."

"Resolve to pay back Snooks the half-sovereign he lent me."

Landlady again knocks at the door. "Mr. Snooks, sir, to see you."

Tibbs, glaring like a fiend, shouts, "Tell him I'm out of doors." On landlady's retirement—"Like the fellow's cheek to come here and dun me for his paltry half-quid. I'll make him wait now."

"Resolve to spend less on whisky, and to buy cheaper cigars."

Shouts down the stairs. "Hi, Mrs. Lettem, send Betsy out for a bottle of whisky—she knows my brand. Here's the money."

"Resolve to pay more attention to the pater's good advice and not ask for any more cash for some time."

Sits down and writes a letter home asking for an advance to meet pressing accounts and debts of honour.

"Resolve to give up gambling." Opens an invitation just received to a card party and sends off an acceptance.

"Resolve to be more circumspect with the fair sex." And goes out that same evening with a new bit of fancy goods and spends a small fortune on her whims, besides getting into trouble with a man who says he has a better right to her.

That's the end of Tibbs's good resolutions. They're too good to be kept, that's about the truth.

Tibbs says he knows it, and purposes making his resolves a shade smaller this year.

"Perhaps I should keep them better," he says.

"Resolve to limit myself to half-a-dozen cigarettes," he suggests, "per day."

I believe Tibbs could easily keep this resolution, as he never smokes cigarettes at all.

"Resolve to drink only one brandy-and-soda a morning."

Naturally Tibbs will adhere to this, too, as he only drinks whisky.

"Resolve to keep away from the moneylenders for some months." They won't lend him another penny, as I happen to know.

"Resolve to cut Peters, if I meet him, as he is a bad companion." Peters gave him the go-by last week, so Peters won't see the cut.

"Resolve not to spend any more cash on pretty little Tottie Mop." Tottie was married to a chap with a title yesterday, and he'll see that Tibbs doesn't.

"Resolve to make it up with rich, old Aunt Pain." Aunt Pain had a stroke last night, and is not likely to know Tibbs again in this world.

Tibbs made this resolution last year and the year before, and never troubled to keep it—now Fate says "You sha'n't, Tibbs."

So Tibbs will be one resolution the less next year.

SIGISMUND SMITH.

AN ELECTION STORY.

WHEN PUDDLEBORO POLLED

By RADCLIFFE MARTIN.

Mr. Geoffrey Tarrant stood on the platform at Euston waiting for the Crewe express, attached to which, as everyone who has studied Bradshaw knows, is a slip carriage for Puddleboro'. As he looked round the dreary station, and saw gloomy-looking, drenched people rushing in out of the wet, he thought "Well, if I'm not a fool to go in for Puddleboro' and politics in November, while there's such a place as Monte Carlo in the world."

His meditations on his folly and the ghastliness of Puddleboro' were interrupted by his train backing into the station.

"Which is the Puddleboro' slip carriage?" he heard a stout, sporting-looking gentleman ask a porter.

The porter respectfully indicated a carriage and took the stout gentleman's belongings to a first-class smoker. Geoffrey Tarrant followed him and entered the same compartment.

As the train left the station, the stout man scrutinised his travelling companion carefully and said, "I saw you in Tattersall's ring to-day, sir."

"Yes," replied Mr. Tarrant, "I happened to be there."

"My name is Miles, sir. 'Honest Joe Miles' they call me in the ring. Now I never forget a face, and when I saw you this afternoon, I knew that I'd seen you or your likeness somewhere. It's just come to me. You're Mr. Tarrant, the Yellow candidate for Puddleboro', and I've seen your picture in the 'Puddleboro' Weekly Argus.'"

"Pleased to make your acquaintance, Mr. Miles. By the way, I should be glad if you won't mention that you saw me at the races to-day. You see I really ought to have been in Puddleboro' last night, but I wired that an important political engagement detained me."

The bookmaker winked. "No need to say another word, sir. Bless you, if I talked about the folk I see in Tattersall's ring, there'd be some pretty scandals. No, sir, 'Honest Joe Miles' has got on by keeping his eyes open and his mouth shut."

"If you're a resident in Puddleboro', I hope that I shall have your vote at the election, Mr. Miles."

"Live just outside the boundary, else you'd have had my vote. Always like the man who's a bit of a sport myself. Now old Gumble, the Pink member, is not a sport."

"He's too beastly respectable for this world," said Tarrant; "but happily he's not much of a speaker."

"Don't you build on that. They like a man who's a bit tongue-tied in Puddleboro'. Think it shows honesty. It'd do you a lot o' good if you broke down now and then. Makes the blessed fools sympathetic. Bless you, it isn't the bookie who shouts the most who draws the most backers. It's just the same with candidates, to my mind. What d'ye think's the odds about this election?"

"Well, speaking in confidence, I don't stand a dog's chance. Old Gumble's been member for twenty years. It's a sort of habit for them to vote for him."

"You never know. Outsiders crop up at times. But what's the odds?"

"About five to one on Gumble, I think."

"You'll lay me five hundred to a hundred, say, that Gumble gets in?"

"Yes, but understand, Mr. Miles, this is on the strict q.t. It wouldn't do for it to be known that in my opinion it was five to one against me. Now to-night I shall have to tell them at the Town Hall that I'm a 'dead cert' to win."

"Well, there's a bit of deception in all businesses, Mr. Tarrant, even in mine. Of course, I'll hold my tongue. But mind, its understood between you and me that you do your best to win the seat."

"My dear sir, I want to win the seat. I'll even break down in my speeches, as you suggest, if you think it'll help me. And if I don't win, then, anyhow, I shall have your hundred pounds to console me. Thank heaven the party officials in London are paying most of my expenses, because it's such a hopeless fight."

"I'll drive in now and then, and see how you e going on. Flat-racing's over and there's not much doing except a bit of ratting at my place. I suppose that you'll be busy on week-days; but if you like to run out on Sunday for a bit of ratting——"

"My dear sir," interrupted the candidate. "Sunday ratting during the election! Do you want to lose your money?"

"I should never myself put it against a candidate that he did a bit of ratting of a Sunday. I likes ratting. Still there's no denying that some folks have queer ideas. P'r'aps you're in the right, Mr. Tarrant."

"By the way, Mr. Miles, you know the Puddleboro' people well. Could you give me the straight tip how to get on with them."

"They're a bit slow-goin' are Puddleboro' folk. You tell 'em that whatever the other side says is lies. Don't you go in for soft-soaping your opponents. They don't understand it. And whatever you do, don't make any new jokes. Give 'em good old jokes they know they ought to laugh at."

"Right, thanks for the hint. It's a bit trying being a candidate for the first time. But my agent seems pretty smart. He wrote me to let him know what train I was coming by to-day, so that he could arrange a spontaneous demonstration of welcome at the station."

Mr. Miles chuckled loudly. "That's the ticket—you be a bit overcome by it. That always goes to the 'eart of the people."

Two hours later their train drew up at Puddleboro' station, and a perspiring political agent, wearing a yellow favour a little larger than a sunflower, led a crowd to the carriage door.

"Tarrant for Puddleboro'!" shrieked the agent, and a gentleman with a cornet who had accompanied the demonstration, led the crowd in singing "For he's a jolly good fellow." Not till it had been sung half-a-dozen times did the agent signal for silence. Then Mr. Tarrant wiped his eyes with his handkerchief, and said: "Gentlemen—no, I must say my dear friends" (tremendous cheering), "I am overcome by this unexpected greeting." (Great applause, led by the agent.) "Such enthusiasm, not so much for myself as for our noble cause, augurs well for the great victory we are going to win. I ask you one and all to remember that the eyes of England are fixed on Puddleboro'." (Rapturous cheering.)

Then amidst terrific cheering from the Yellows, and groans from a casual Pink supporter who chanced to be there and was gibbetted in the next issue of the "Puddleboro' Argus" as a "subsidised hireling," Mr. Tarrant was escorted to his carriage.

"How are things going, Binks?" he said to his agent, directly he was safely out of reach of the popular enthusiasm.

"You've a bit of a chance, sir. That touch of yours with the handkerchief was just the right thing. Give 'em a bit of 'uman feelin' like that and you'll do better. And I've just got a thing that ought to catch you the tradesmen's vote. I've proof that old Gumble's been doin' busin[e]ss with the London Stores."

"Well, I get everything from the Stores myself," replied the candidate.

"But you're not a local man, and no one here cares or knows where you get your things. Look at this proof of a poster. Puddleboro' will be yellow with it to-morrow. 'Which will you vote for—Tarrant, who encourages local industries, or Gumble, who deals with the London Stores?' That'll stir up the grocers and drapers, and Gumble can't contradict it. Then I've a splendid dodge for to-night's meeting. My nephew'll throw a stone at you as you enter the Town Hall."

"I'm blessed if he will," said the startled candidate.

"Oh, he won't hit you, sir," replied the agent reassuringly. "Then you'll go in and denounce the outrage. If Gumble asks his supporters to behave themselves, we score—if he doesn't, we score, for he's condoning violence. I've plenty more ideas. With a bit of luck we'll pull Gumble's majority down to a couple of hundred, and that'll be a moral victory."

That night there was a crowded meeting at the Town Hall, and a thrill of horror ran through the assembly when the Chairman announced that some Pink miscreant had made an attempt to assault, if not to murder, the Yellow candidate. A tremendous sensation was caused, when the Chairman concluded by placing on the table the stone with which the dastardly attempt was made. When Mr. Tarrant rose he was received with rapturous applause.

"Gentlemen," he said, "let me say first of all that no calumny, no threats, no personal violence, will induce me to give up the honour of being the standard-bearer of the grand old Yellow cause in Puddleboro'. The hirelings of the Pinks may do their worst. I defy them." (Terrific cheering, and "For he's a jolly good fellow," started by the election agent's nephew at the back of the hall.) "I feel the great responsibility of representing you in Parliament. When I look round on this sea of intelligent faces—(loud cheering)—I am overwhelmed." (More cheers. The candidate paused for a moment, evidently in confusion.) "Gentlemen, the warmth of your welcome has made me forget the speech I had prepared. I beg you to excuse my breakdown. Pardon any imperfections in the few halting remarks I shall make you.

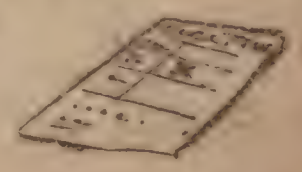
"Now, Mr. Gumble's programme reminds me of a story of a Curate who was breakfasting with a Bishop. Now, the Curate had an egg which was as objectionable—let me say, as the repulsive methods of Mr. Gumble's supporters are to every honest Englishman. The Bishop asked him: 'Is not your egg to your liking?' and the timid curate replied, 'My lord, it is good in parts.' (Immense laughter.) Mr. Gumble's political programme is like that egg, gentlemen—fair and polished as to its exterior, but when you get to its inside it is rotten. Yes, gentlemen, rotten and poisonous to the best interests of England and Puddleboro'."

The agent button-holed the candidate after the meeting. "Look here, Mr. Tarrant, a few more speeches like that, and—well, I don't say you'll win, but it'll be a nearer thing than I thought."

"Good," said the candidate, "and the next time your nephew throws a stone at me, ask him not to cut things quite so fine. It grazed my nose. I think the moral effect would be quite as good if he hit one of my supporters."

A few days afterwards the election had got into full swing and one half of the population of Puddleboro' was not on speaking terms with the other half. One morning "Honest Joe Miles" strolled into the bar of the Red Lion—which was the place where the supporters of the Pink party mostly congregated. He saw there Mr. Timmins, an energetic Pink worker, and tapping him on the shoulder said, "You've got a good thing on this election, Timmins."

"It's a walk-over," cried Mr. Timmins. "When election day comes, that lying, blackguardly Yellow



carpet-bagger will pack his bag and be off to London without waiting for the votes to be counted. The people of Puddleboro' always have preferred righteousness and truth to lying and villainy."

"It's a snip for old Gumble," said the bookmaker heartily. "What majority do you think he'll have?"

"That depends, Mr. Miles, on how the lies of the Yellows are credited by the more credulous of the voters."

"I'll lay you ten pound to five that Gumble's in by five hundred."

Mr. Timmins hesitated. Well, I don't know, Mr. Miles. Yes, I'll take it. I never was a man to refuse a sporting bet, even if the chances was against me."

"Right-o," cried the bookmaker, making an entry in his pocket-book. "'Ello, there's my old friend, Waller, over there. Excuse me if I have a word with him."

Mr. Waller, another great Pink worker, was equally confident about Mr. Gumble's success—yet his confidence in the size of his majority was not so great that he would decline Mr. Miles's bet. In this way Mr. Miles went round among Mr. Gumble's best workers. Soon he had wagered with twenty of them that Mr. Gumble was in by over five hundred.

The election agent of the Pink party heard of it and rubbed his hands when he met Mr. Gumble the next morning.

"How are things going?" inquired Mr. Gumble.

"Very well," chuckled the agent. "Joe Miles, who's a big bookmaker round here, and a very shrewd man, is laying two to one that you're in by five hundred. He's not the man to lay odds unless he knows something."

"That's good news," returned Mr. Gumble. "I had a sort of feeling that things were going the other way. Now this Tarrant wants me to apologise because someone nearly hit him on the head with a stone. I wish it had knocked his brains out. Should you do it?"

The agent shook his head. "If you apologise for what your supporters have done, they won't like being given away. Then they'll bill your apology with a flare heading. No, you'd better disclaim all responsibility for any popular indignation aroused by the malignant attacks of the Yellow candidate."

Consequently that day Puddleboro' was placarded with huge posters, "Mr. Gumble declines to apologise for Pink Ruffianism. Electors of Puddleboro', what do you think of this?"

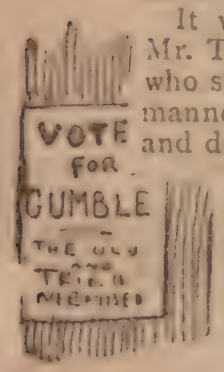
So the great contest went on. The supporters of Mr. Tarrant said that they were absolutely confident, and were in reality so doubtful that they worked like horses. The supporters of Mr. Gumble were in very deed confident, and consequently took things rather easily—especially the twenty ardent workers who did not wish their candidate to get in by more than five hundred votes.

Mr. Gumble got himself into one more fix. It was his custom, in order to please the electors, to declare that he was in favour of almost anything they suggested to him. Mr. Tarrant's election agent perceived this weakness, and contrived that this question should be sent up: "Are you in favour of mixed bathing for the unemployed?"

Mechanically Mr. Gumble replied "Yes." And the next night the Yellow candidate denounced him as one who scoffed at the sufferings of the out-of-works and proposed to treat them with a hideous disregard of decency and propriety.

At last the day of the poll came. Puddleboro' was full of party colours and party cries. An intelligent foreigner would have been amazed at the wickedness attributed to both candidates—for the posters of each party stated that it was the deliberate intention of the other party to starve the working man. If one party was elected, he would have no food—if the other, no employment.

It was an anxious time in the counting-room. Mr. Tarrant had been introduced to Mr. Gumble, who shook hands with him in a coldly patronising manner, and to Mrs. Gumble, who sniffed loudly and declined to shake hands at all.



The counting was nearing completion, and there was a buzz of excitement in the room.

"Neck and neck," whispered Tarrant's agent; "it's a toss-up on the last bundle."

The crowd clustered closer round the table, the murmurs of excitement grew louder, Mr. Gumble could scarcely hide his uneasiness, when suddenly an excited Alderman burst through the throng and embraced Tarrant. "You're in by three," he cried.

Some one waved a yellow flag from the window, and a great roar of mingled exultation and wrath came from the Town Hall Square. Then the returning-officer marched solemnly to the window, and read out to a howling multitude, whose shouting would have drowned a fog-horn, the figures:

TARRANT 3,682
GUMBLE 3,679

And Mr. Tarrant spent the rest of the night declaring that his victory was due to the righteousness of his cause and the enlightened patriotism of Puddleboro'; whilst Mr. Gumble declared that it was a greater honour to be second at the poll than to be first and have condescended to the venomous lies and abominable methods of the Yellow party.

But a day later, when the member for Puddleboro' left his constituency for London, Mr. Miles happened to be travelling by the same train. When they chanced to be alone in the carriage, Geoffrey Tarrant said, "Ah, Mr. Miles, there's that little matter of our wager. I'll send you a cheque by to-night's post."

Mr. Miles shook his head. "Send the cheque when you like—that don't worry me. You're a cute 'un, you are. But I'll tell you this. I didn't see it at the time, but I see it now. You guessed all along that I'd make myself sure of winning your money by hedging a bit with Gumble's supporters."

The new member winked. "That possibility had occurred to me, Mr. Miles. In fact, that was why I got into the same compartment with you, when I went down to Puddleboro'. But you must not insinuate that your little private wagers, of which I have no knowledge, affected the result. I owe my victory entirely to the enlightened patriotism of Puddleboro'."

LIFE INSURANCE.

This paragraph is not a recommendation of any particular company, so you may read it through with a feeling of safety; you will not find a sugar-coated pill at the end of it, although the title might possibly suggest such a discovery.

The majority of men do not worry about insurance until they find that they have someone depending upon them, and it is usually not until they marry that they realise the necessity for insuring.

There are others, however, besides the young married man who ought to insure their lives.

You go in for sports and take many risks, and your womenfolk would be the last to advise you not to do so, for in their hearts they always admire a man more when they know that he is not afraid to take reasonable hazards. You may be riding a restive horse or driving a motor-car or doing something else in the sporting way that involves risk, when suddenly the idea comes to you that if an accident overtook you there would be disastrous results to those whom you care for. The idea is disquieting and you try to banish it, but it continues to obtrude itself.

It is very different with the man whose life is adequately insured. The instinct of self-preservation is as keen with him as with anyone else, and he is no more reckless than he was before, but he knows that in the event of an accident he alone would suffer. Knowing this, he takes his risks with all the freeheartedness that embodies half the joy of sport.

A good accident policy is the best for the average sportsman, but there are many attractive schemes on the endowment and "sharing profits" systems that may appeal to him. His best plan is to write to the various well-known insurance companies and compare the offers that they make him.

"ROUGHS" OF THE RINK.

SOME SKATERS WE COULD DO WITHOUT.

It is a melancholy, but none the less true, fact that wherever a particular sport or pastime takes a firm hold on the public, some objectionable type of devotee is sure to spring up here and there to spoil people's enjoyment. Rinking is a case in point.

For instance, I think it is safe to say that few of our readers have ever gone to a rink without meeting the "scorcher." He is a particularly objectionable person.

He dashes round and round with loud whoops, his bare head well tucked down, and his arms whirling round him; and whenever he comes across a novice—or a party of learners, for preference—wobbling laboriously along, he bears down upon them. If one of them, in trying to turn so as to evade him, comes a cropper, the genial scorcher's enjoyment is intense.

Particularly trying, too, is the individual who, either forgetful of his own early struggles, or perhaps even unable to skate at all, loves to look on at and openly deride the performances of beginners. He is not infrequently accompanied by a girl of his own type, and in loud tones the two make such remarks as this to each other, "My word! if I catch 'im (or 'er) bendin'!" "Oo-er! Nearly over that time!"; "Ha! Ha! Ha! Well, this is well worth the bob entrance fee, just for the laughs you get, ain't it?" and so on.

Another type of rinker who gets very severely on the average quiet skater's nerves is the man who is good at trick skating, and who combines a knowledge of that fact with a desire to display his prowess.

You will see him ostentatiously place a half-penny or an orange or a cork on the floor, and then majestically skate round it for five or ten minutes. Possibly his self-satisfied air, and the plaudits of a select gathering of admiring friends, will cause a small crowd to assemble round him; and the unfortunate skater, whose sole desire is to go quietly round and round, will be very much inconvenienced.

Then, again, there is the man—or, generally, rather, man and woman—who will always refuse to conform to the orders which are signalled from time to time for the purpose of regulating the pace of the skaters. For instance, when the board says "Skate slowly," you will see them careering madly round; but when a brisk pace is set, they will drop into a dawdling glide, and make a nuisance of themselves to everyone else. Their justification is that they have paid their money to come in, and they consider they have the right to skate at whatever pace they choose.

Another skater who always earns the scorn and contumely of ordinary sport-loving rinkers is the callow youth, who goes chiefly with the object of causing a flutter in the inexperienced and susceptible hearts of little girl skaters. I remember a rather amusing accident that happened to one of these rinking Lotharios a short time ago.

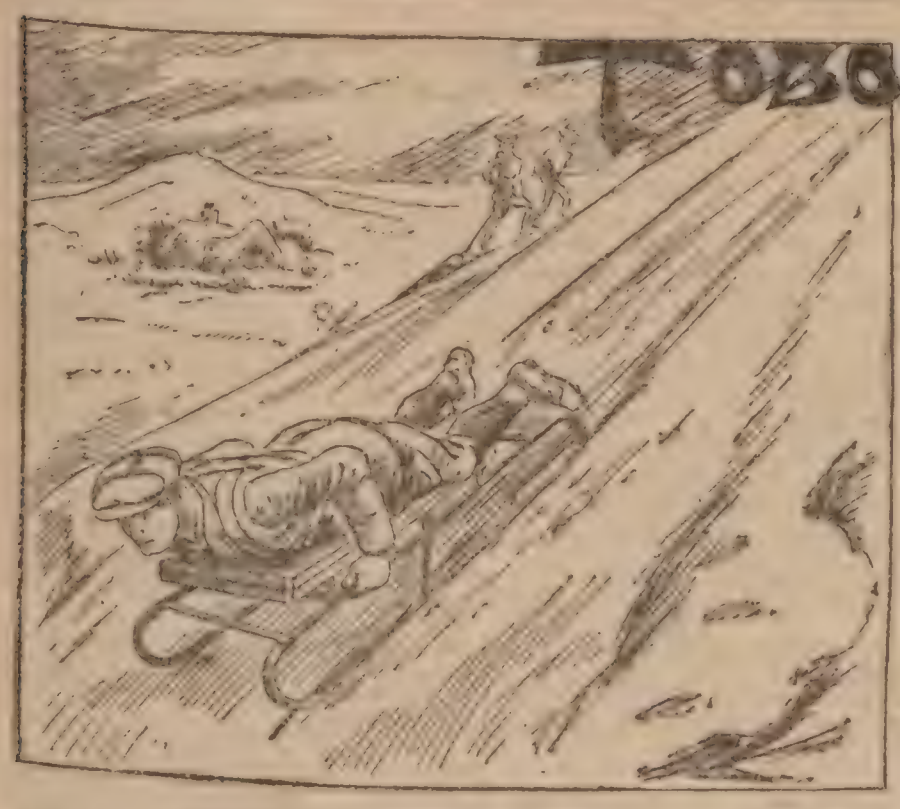
The youth in question was skating slowly along, casting at intervals glances full of juvenile audacity at a young girl with her hair down her back, some little distance away. At length the eyes of the two youngsters met, and the boy fondly imagined that he had made a great impression, when he suddenly collided with another skater, who fell with him to the ground. Rising hurriedly—realising that the eyes of his enslaver were on him—he was greeted with a torrent of invective from—his own father.

In very many rinks the attendants—most of whom, by the way, are Yankees—are exceedingly uncivil, not to say brutal, in their manner towards inoffensive skaters. "Now then, get off the rink there!" they will shout; and at the slightest show of indignation will hustle you off with no attempt at ceremony.

I have seen such happenings over and over again; and I feel very strongly that it is a matter on which a vigorous protest should be registered by devotees of the rink.

J. COGHLAN.

TOBOGGANING



AN EXHILARATING WINTER SPORT.

Given a moderately steep hill or suburban road and a fall of two or three inches of snow, followed by a good hard frost, and you have ideal conditions for tobogganing.

Of all our winter sports there is none which can beat tobogganing, either for exercise or pure enjoyment.

In some districts I know, this sport is left mostly to children, but in many places the young and old of both sexes revel in it, and it is preferred by many even to skating; the more so because of its cheapness, for there are no entrance fees to be paid, as on a skating-rink.

Nothing could be more exhilarating than the rush over the hard snow, worn as smooth as ice by the endless passage of scores of iron runners, and the bracing nip of the keen air, as one flies through it at twenty miles an hour, is calculated to bring the blood to the cheeks of the palest.

After a few minutes of the sport, instead of feeling cold, one is obliged to doff coats and mufflers, so warm does one become from the vigorous exercise.

Many and varied are the types of toboggans and sleds used, from the highly finished and priced—toboggans, with fine steel runners, to be bought at the fancy stores, down to the humble, but quite as efficient, home-made sled.

CHEAPEST AND BEST.

And from experience with most kinds, I think that the ordinary solidly-built wooden sled, with rounded iron runners, is the best, at least for the rough tobogganing to be had in this country, although, perhaps, upon the slopes of Switzerland the more expensive sleds may be preferable.

A strong and efficient sled may easily be made at home by a handy man, or any local joiner will make one to your directions for four or five shillings.

The length of the sled depends upon the number of people you wish it to accommodate, about twelve inches being required for each person. You must also allow about nine inches of the runners to project at each end.

A handy size of sled can be made by procuring two pieces of ordinary board about 6ft. long by 6in. broad and 1in. thick. Any joiner will supply you with these and a sufficient number of cross-boards for about two shillings.

FINISHING OFF THE ENDS.

The long boards must now be rounded off at each end with a keyhole saw, so as to allow the iron runners to be turned up at the ends.

Now procure two lengths of iron 6ft. 1in. long by 1in. broad, flat on one side and rounded on the other. It is important that the runners should be rounded beneath, as flat runners are very unsatisfactory.

These will cost about one shilling and sixpence from any blacksmith, and you can get him to bore six or seven screw holes in them and to turn up the ends, to correspond with your wooden runners.

Remember to have screw-holes bored about one inch from each end of the iron runners, so that the ends can be neatly screwed down. Or, if you prefer it, you can have the iron runners made long enough to curve round in a circle in front, and this looks very well, besides affording a good grip to the steerer.

All that now remains to be done is to screw the iron runners on to your wooden boards, putting the screws well down in the holes; and, if necessary, filing the tops of them down flush with the runners, so as to have all perfectly smooth. Before you proceed to nail on the cross boards, it is necessary to strengthen the structure by a board screwed across between the runners, and in the centre of the sledge.

The crossboards can now be nailed on. These should be about 2ft. long—that is, the breadth of the sled should be about one-third of its length. About two inches of the crossboards should project over the runners at each side, so as to form a hand-grip to the steerer.

Two small holes can now be bored in the front of the runners, through which to pass the pulling rope, and the sled is complete.

PREPARING THE RUNNERS.

Before using, the runners should be well cleaned with a file or emery paper, so as to ensure their running smoothly.

This type of toboggan will hold from four to five persons safely, and is best steered from the front by a person with skates on, the knees of the steerer being drawn up, and the feet held close together, and simply turned in whatever direction the steerer wishes the sled to go.

It is usually necessary for the steerer to take off his skates at the foot of the hill. In this case it is best to use only one skate, so that little time is lost in taking it off and fixing it.

A little practice will soon enable anyone to steer with one skate, the other foot being crossed over the steering foot.

There are various other ways of steering the toboggan without skates, such as by pressing the heel into the ground at the side to which you want to go, or from the back by the hands; but these methods are inclined to hinder the speed of the toboggan, and are not nearly so easy or reliable as steering with a skate.

Care should be taken to keep the rope clear of the runners, and as it is not used in steering—as many suppose—it should be laid along the sled before the tobogganers take their places.

STEERING.

When only one person is using the toboggan, the usual thing is to lie full length along the sled, and gripping the front of the sled, steer by jerking it in the necessary direction, and by pressing the side of the foot on the ground, on whatever side it is necessary to go.

Nothing could be more exciting than a race between a number of toboggans, the sledgers shouting and swaying, in their eagerness to increase the speed. The fun soon becomes fast and furious, and diversions are continually being caused by the collisions which often take place, the occupants being shot out in every direction.

This, however, only seems to add to the general amusement, and everybody seems in the best of spirits when tobogganing. It is usually late at night before the last sleds are pulled homewards, and the din and shouting dies away.

H. R. MANN.

WASTE BASKETS.

To keep a room tidy, it is necessary to have some handy place in which waste may be put.

In your bedroom you have your dirty linen basket—or a handy box which serves the same purpose—and in that you put your dirty underclothing and handkerchiefs, which are practically waste until they are washed and made fit to wear again.

Without such a receptacle, a man's bedroom soon becomes unpleasant, for the dirty linen that ought to be stowed away is left lying about on the floor.

You can rig up a very serviceable substitute for a linen basket by tacking some cloth on a wooden framework.

A good tip is to have the dirty linen basket close beside your dressing-table, so that you can throw into it your soiled collars and handkerchiefs directly you discard them.

In your sitting-room it is just as necessary to have a waste paper basket, either a wicker affair, such as you can buy for a few shillings, or one constructed of wood; the latter you can easily make.

THE MODERN MAN LEAGUE.

Those readers who have not already done so should join the League at once, for its establishment has already proved of infinite benefit to many of its members, and it is unquestionably the greatest effort that has ever been made for the furtherance of good sportsmanship and good fellowship.

The badge gives you the privilege of speaking to other members without the formality of an introduction, for you are both friends of ours.

These are the badges we supply, with their respective prices: Gold-plated tie-pin or safety-pin, 6d.; gold-plated lapel or cap badge, 6d.; gold-plated pendant for watch-chain, 6d.; solid silver tie-pin or safety-pin, 1s.; solid silver lapel or cap badge, 1s.; solid silver pendant for watch-chain, 1s.; 9-ct. gold tie-pin, safety-pin, or pendant, 6s.; 18-ct. gold tie-pin, safety-pin, or pendant, 12s.

We specially recommend the tie-pins, as they are particularly neat.

Fill up the coupon, striking out the words which do not apply, enclose it with a P.O. to cover the price of the badge you select, and post your letter to the Editor, THE MODERN MAN, Westinghouse Building, Strand, London. Please write the word "League" on the top left-hand corner of your envelope.

APPLICATION FORM.

Please enrol me as a Member of THE MODERN MAN League, and forward me a Badge of Membership, for which I enclose P.O. value.....

I desire the Badge to be of 18-ct. gold, 9-ct. gold, solid silver, gold-plated; and it is to be fitted as a tie-pin, a safety-pin, a pendant for the watch chain, a lapel or cap badge. (Strike out the words which do not apply.)

Signature.....

Address.....

.....

The League Badge (Actual size).

SPORT WAVES.

HOW THEY BENEFIT THE ATHLETE.

The English sportsman is never content to let an idle hour be marked against him. He must be "up and at" something or somebody, and he goes at it with even greater verve than did Napoleon's Old Guard at the "Thin Red Line."

Certain outlets he can always find for his unbounded energy. These are the standing dishes of sport, without which he would find it hard to get along.

Cricket and football for large masses of the people will probably never lose their attraction, nor will hunting for the more prosperously situated members of the rural districts. Shooting and fishing never tire their votaries, while the number that go in for what are more particularly described as "athletics" seems to grow every year.

In this category may be placed all gymnastics, also boxing, fencing, running, jumping, and all kindred sports.

But in the midst of this regular sporting fare there often arises an appetite for something savouring of novelty. Muscles and nerves and blood seem to cry out for more tasty fare, just as the palate will sometimes revolt from the joint and vegetables and pudding and swing round to caviare and rich dishes by way of a change.

I hold that all such expressions of desire for novelty in exercise are entirely good, and that they can hardly be carried to excess.

Brought up, as it were, on the solid bread of time-honoured games, the sportsman sometimes yearns for a little of the cake of novelty, and while the craving is on him he will entirely (and wisely) abandon the old routine of his sports and plunge with all his force and enthusiasm into the fashion of the moment.

It matters little what this fashion happens to be. The essential element is change and complete difference from his usual activities. It is not half so important that this change should be to something better or supremely vitalising, exciting, or even obviously healthful. The great thing is that he gains a change, and his tired and worked-out muscles have an opportunity to recover tone and freshness.

I know a man who at fairly long intervals gives up his cross-country running, and devotes himself to—solo whist! It may not be an ideal change, and his is probably an extreme case, but while his six weeks fit of card-playing lasts, his running and enduring powers have a complete rest, and his mind is drawn away from his first and real love for a time. He goes back refreshed and keen, and the rest invariably, so he declares, does him a world of good.

By superior persons who do little else beyond criticising others for their keenness in sport, these times of sudden change are described as crazes. The word is invariably used in its least pleasing sense, and the sportsmen who are "bitten" are looked down upon; but, if the truth were known, the craze often comes to the aid of the athlete when all the training and dieting in the world can do nothing more for a man.

Just now it happens that the skating rink is providing the means for the necessary change, and there are few sports which offer so many ideal chances for real relaxation. A course of roller skating on a good rink, such as may now be found in almost every large town and every populous suburb of London, can only do an athlete good.

By-and-by, when the rinks have lost their atmosphere of novelty, the sportsman will return to his regular sports, and rinking will take a less prominent place, though it will undoubtedly hold its own as a "change" sport.

So far from fighting shy of any so-called craze of the moment, the sportsman can only do himself good by letting it bite him pretty severely, for it will afford him one of his best chances of keeping fit in whatever he considers to be his strongest point.

Crazes, in short, are the sportsman's physic, preserving his physical tone and giving him the advantages of a varied athletic diet.

CHARLES EVERTON.

MY NOTEBOOK.

WHAT THIS PAPER CAN DO.

You may recall that some time ago I dealt in "My Notebook" with a new force which is called the Legion of Scouts. One of the officers connected with it called upon me and enlisted my assistance in the matter of obtaining recruits. Before granting his request, I satisfied myself that the force was a thoroughly useful one, and, having come to this decision, I inserted a paragraph recommending it to those readers who had not the time for Territorial work, or who had been debarred from joining by deficiency in eyesight.

I am now in receipt of a letter from the Commanding Officer, in which he thanks me on behalf of himself and the members of the Legion of Scouts for what I have been able to do in the matter of recruiting.

The response of my readers has been so enthusiastic that not only has the London division been filled, but a new division is being formed in the Midlands, entirely owing to the support given to the movement by readers of this paper.

In this connection I am requested by Lieut. Ferriday to say that he will be happy to meet any Birmingham readers who care to come to him on Thursdays or Fridays at the Spencer Street Schools, corner of Warstone Lane, Birmingham. Those interested in the movement who may be unable to see him personally, should write to him at 17, Winson Green Road, Birmingham.

Applications for admission to the London division should be made to the Commanding Officer, 28A, Hermes-street, Pentonville, London, N.

Perhaps I ought to explain that I am not in any way connected with the Legion of Scouts, and knew nothing of them until their representative called upon me. I mention this to show that I have been grinding no personal axe in assisting them.

The movement struck me as being a good thing, and therefore I recommended it. I did this with enthusiasm, because I have received many letters from readers who are unable, for one reason or another, to join the Territorials, and who are almost breaking their hearts about it. They want to be able to serve their country in time of need, they want to undergo military training, and they want, perhaps, to wear a uniform—a very pardonable vanity.

I may be excused for repeating here that the Legion of Scouts is in no wise to be confused either with the Legion of Frontiersmen or with the Boy Scouts. In the Legion of Scouts the minimum age is eighteen, so that it is a force for men and not for youngsters.

OFFICIAL RED TAPE.

This matter brings to my recollection the fact that some time ago I mentioned in this paper my readiness to fill at short notice any Territorial unit which might be deficient in recruits. I invited those interested to apply to me.

I have not received one reply.

My own personal experience in connection with the Territorial Force has shown me that, excellent as it undoubtedly is, it is, like most other official organisations, obsessed with red tape.

I have known men to be refused admission on some trivial cause even although they were worth, as fighting men, twenty others whom I could name who are already members of the force.

The fault is largely due to the pettiness of officials. It is a strange thing, but nevertheless a fact, that when a country doctor receives an official appointment as Medical Officer of the local Territorials, he, to use a horsey expression, "gets above himself"; that is unless he is a strong man.

Nevertheless, in spite of all the inevitable pettiness of officialdom, I have stuck by the Territorials through thick and thin, and unquestionably I do so now, for the force is one which serves an excellent purpose, not only so far as the country is concerned, but also so far as concerns the individuals in it.

WHY TERRITORIAL OFFICERS AFFECT TO DESPISE THE PRESS.

One thing which has struck me particularly has been the view taken by Territorial officers of the assistance that has been rendered to the force by such papers as my own.

A few Territorial officers are county gentlemen, regular old-fashioned squires, with private incomes, but the vast majority of those I have met are dependent for a living upon trade. In too many cases it is with them, as with the little country doctors to whom I referred: when they obtain their commissions, they become sidey. Their one aim and object henceforward is to forget, and to endeavour to make others forget, the fact that they are different from officers in the Regular Army.

You might call this by the harsh name of snobbery, but I am more inclined to think that it is simply human weakness.

A CASE IN POINT.

I have in my mind one particular officer whose livelihood is derived from a brewery which is notorious for its bad beer. Nevertheless it pays, and it enables him to keep up a small country house with some pretentiousness.

If you met him, I would defy you to guess his business. He crops and brushes his moustache in the most military fashion, and he never smiles, because he has never seen a photograph of an officer in the Regular Army smiling.

I may say that with the majority of his brother officers he unfortunately goes down very well, for in that particular regiment there is much of this sort of thing. The officers' mess is a holy of holies of pretence, where it is an unwritten law that no man shall ask another any question concerning his private life, for each and all have facts that they would rather not disclose. Each deceives the other by taking him at his face value, on the understanding that he shall be taken ditto. To the philosophic observer it is all intensely amusing, and very, very childish.

FINER TYPES.

I should not like you to think that all officers of the Territorial force are like the types I have described, for many of them are thorough gentlemen in every sense of the word. Personally I have the pleasure of knowing many who have sacrificed not only their time, but also their business interests in order to do what they could to further a movement which they considered a good one. They are thorough Britishers and thorough gentlemen, acceptable alike to their fellow officers and to the men under them; but I am afraid that the comments I have made are applicable to the majority of Territorial officers—although I am happy to say not to all—and this is the reason why these men affect to despise the Press.

The originators of the movement frankly appealed to the newspapers for support, but I am sorry to say that few Commanding Officers care to do so. Their view is: "A Colonel in the Regular Army would never do that sort of thing, don't you know," and so they remain content with units under strength instead of applying to me for the word of recommendation that would fill any unit in the country.

AN OFFER.

This is not an empty boast, for I am proud to say that my readers are chiefly of precisely the class wanted for Territorials, and also my circulation is distributed throughout the whole country.

I have filled the Legion of Scouts as an experiment, and have even made it necessary for them to start a new branch. I could fill any Territorial unit as readily, but the Commanding Officers of those which are under strength stand aloof, and will continue to do so as long as red tape is allowed to rule this, as it does all other official organisations.

YOUR EDITOR.

Westinghouse Building, Strand, London.

WHEN BUYING A CHEAP SUIT

HOW TO MAKE IT LOOK LIKE THE BOND STREET PRODUCT.

How many of us are there who, though keenly desirous of looking well-turned-out in clothes bearing the stamp of a good tailor, are, nevertheless, precluded by circumstances from gratifying our inclinations in this direction?

Hundreds of thousands—and I am one of them. But although my very limited income will only admit of the cheapest possible suit every spring and autumn, I nevertheless enjoy among my intimates the reputation of being "a well-dressed chap." And it certainly is a fact that somehow I do manage to look better turned out than some men I know, who are in a position to spend considerably more money on their clothes.

Why is this? Because I know the secret of making a cheap suit look well—and for the benefit of any readers of THE MODERN MAN who may be in the same financial circumstances as myself I will explain it here in the form of a few hints to the man who is going to a cheap tailor's to be measured for a new suit.

First of all, bear in mind that the cheap tailor—the man who makes you a suit for 25s. or 35s. is invariably a cash tailor.

"Yes," you will perhaps think at this point. "But what has this to do with the subject?" A lot—as a little thought will convince you.

The man who makes you a suit, and receives his money before you take it away, is naturally much less concerned to make it a good fit than the man who supplies you with a suit on credit; for the reason that in the latter case you can, if not satisfied, refuse to pay for the suit, or, at any rate, to pay the full price for it.

Moral.—When you are going to a cheap cash tailor, think out exactly how you want your suit made beforehand, and don't be afraid of dinning your directions into the "snip's" head.

For instance, suppose you go to a man of this kind and simply say: "I want a blue serge suit at 25s. 9d.," he will just whip a tape-measure out of his pocket, pass it cursorily round and about you, ask for a small deposit; and then, some three or four days later, on paying for it in full, you will probably receive a suit which might have been ready-made for all the relationship it has with the measurements of your body.

One of the commonest mistakes made by the cheap "snip" is to make the trousers too tight. Now, if you observe men who can afford to buy their clothes in the neighbourhood of Bond Street, you will find that their trousers are distinctly "roomy" all the way from the thigh to the ankle, but "shape" well, as tailors say.

Tell your tailor that you want a lot of room at the hips, knees, and calves; and that you don't want them to be "skimpy" round the ankle where the turn-up is. He may possibly try to dissuade you, saying that slightly tight trousers are "the fashionable wear to-day, sir," but don't be taken in by him. He wants to economise cloth; but you should make him give you all you want for your money.

If you intend to wear the trousers turned up, have them pressed so.

The waistcoat is fairly easily dealt with. All you have to remember is that it should be cut fairly low, with long points, and should be very roomy in the chest. Nothing spoils a man's appearance so much as a tight waistcoat. It makes him look frightfully narrow-shouldered.

The points to impress forcibly on your tailor regarding the coat are that the collar should be high enough well to cover your collar-stud (some tailors are very lax in this respect, for the sake of economy); that the shoulder-seams should be well ironed down; that you should have all the room you want under the armpits; and that the coat should be fairly "long in the skirt."

Then if you make him follow your orders faithfully, I venture to assert that for between 25s. and 35s. you will have a suit which will look as though it might have cost between four and five guineas.

C. S. JONES.

PITY.

"Cabman," she said, as she came out of Waterloo, "I want to get to Victoria—and fast!"

She handed up to him her various belongings, for she was sufficiently frugal-minded to avoid the expense of a porter. Then she and her little daughter stepped into the cab, and the vehicle bowled down the incline and away to Victoria.

They had not proceeded very far when cabby was unlucky enough to get a piece of dust in his eye. Naturally a tear rolled down his cheek, but he did not remove it or the speck of dust, for his hands were too busy, his horse being a youngster.

"One-and-six, please ma'am," he said, when they reached Victoria, and the lady paid him his exact fare.

But the little girl had a tender heart, and while the cabman was still wiping the injured eye with his handkerchief, she returned and said:

"Please, cabman, mother is very sorry. Here is another sixpence. She didn't think that you would cry about it."

CONSOLATION.

They were a newly-married couple.

[This story is intended for the perusal of elderly readers only.]

She met him on the doorstep and took his umbrella and his hat from him, but as he followed her into the dining-room he observed that there was something amiss.

"Harold," she said, "how can I break the news to you?"

"I hope," he replied, with visions of his account with the Stores, "the servant has not been breaking anything more expensive than news."

"No, no," she replied. "She has not broken anything that matters—only the cut-glass salad bowl, three tumblers and a water-bottle. What I have to tell you is that there are no sweets for dinner. I have been the victim of a terrible accident."

He went over to her, with all the grace of the hero of a serial story, and smoothed her golden locks.

"Yes," she said, "I made some beautiful fruit tarts for dinner, but the mice got into the pantry and ate them all up."

"Dear, kind-hearted little girl!" he murmured. "I always knew you were fond of animals, but there's really no need to worry about the death of a few mice."

RING OFF.

The vicar had recently had a telephone installed in his house, and, like most toys, it was for a time a thing of infinite delight.

He had the usual storms with the young ladies responsible for making connections at the Exchange, but in a day or two he got level with their eccentricities by adopting those various formulæ demanded by these myrmidons of science.

Everything went well till Sunday, when he said, "We shall now sing hymn double three o."

And the old ladies in the congregation echoed "Oh!"

LUNCHING ALONE.

IS THE PRACTICE ADVISABLE?

A friend of mine, who is one of the most notorious gourmets in London, has frequently said to me that if you take lunch with anyone else, you do neither yourself nor the chef justice.

"If the meal is well cooked," he has assured me, "it ought to suffice not only to keep a man's appetite busy, but also to keep his mind engaged."

I admit that there is much pleasure in eating, but I think that there are comparatively few men who can honestly say that a meal is of sufficient interest to them to take their thoughts right away from business cares.

To the acknowledged gourmet the dishes are of such vast importance that in contemplating and enjoying them he can forget everything else, but the average man is not equally gifted—or cursed.

To him the mid-day meal is seldom more than the fulfilment of a duty that he owes himself. He is supplying the needs of the inner man because he knows that only by doing so can he hope to be efficient in the transaction of his business during the rest of the day. He does not take very much pleasure in the mere process of eating, possibly because he does not see fit to pay the price that makes a meal an almost æsthetic pleasure instead of being merely a matter of necessity.

It is the average man and not the gourmet, however, that we have to consider; and I think that in his case he certainly ought to lunch with someone else.

The mid-day meal is to the average city worker something more than a mere stoking of the internal engines—it is his one opportunity for getting mentally refreshed for the afternoon's work.

His first consideration is the banishing of business cares from his mind, and there is no easier way to this end than lunching with a man who is engaged in a totally different line from your own.

If you lunch with someone in your own business, you naturally talk about that business, but if your friend earns his living in another sphere, you discuss topics that are of interest to both of you, and that are quite unconnected with business.

Sport, matters theatrical — even political — furnish you with subjects for conversation, and the end of the meal finds you refreshed in more ways than one.

There is an art in the selection of lunching companions, and it is an art worth cultivating. The man who grates upon you must be left severely alone, but the sympathetic spirit is to be assiduously encouraged. Lunch with him weekly, and try if possible to have such a one to lunch with you each day of the week.

The lunch hour affords you an opportunity for maintaining old friendships and for building up new ones, and it should not be neglected.

HENRY T. WATSON.

THE SPORTING TIMES

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Rapid Physical Development

A WEEKLY FEATURE.

Conducted by
F. G. MITCHELL, M.A.

THE VALUE OF BOXING.

I have repeatedly referred in these columns to the value of boxing as an exercise, quite apart from the good fellowship that inevitably results when two fellows start knocking one another about.

There is nothing like it for keeping a man fit, supple, and agile, and giving him a quickness of action that he carries into everyday life.

I would, therefore, commend to the notice of those of my readers who have already attained a good development by means of exercises and systematic physical culture the series of articles by Mr. Gowing, which appear weekly in another column.

A NOVEL ARM DEVELOPER.

For this exercise you need a strong table, or a "dressing-chest" will probably answer the purpose.

Stand with your back to it and place your hands on the edge as shown in the sketch.

Plant your feet as far away from the table as possible, so as to allow the toes to remain on the ground.

Simple but effective.

Keep the body absolutely stiff, with the head thrown well back, and bend the arms gradually so as to lower yourself until your back is almost touching the table. Then raise yourself again to the position illustrated and repeat the movement some half-dozen times.

All the muscles of the arm and shoulder will be greatly developed by the regular practising of this exercise, and at the same time the body-muscles profit from the exertion of keeping the body and legs stiff, and the muscles of the ankle and calf by that of keeping the feet flat.

A KNEADING EXERCISE.

Stand erect with the hands at the sides. Raise the legs alternately as high as possible, bending them at the hip and knee as much as you can.

This must be done rapidly and smartly.

Clasp the hands in front of the knee as it comes up, and press it towards your body as hard as possible.

This should be done rapidly, one leg being brought up as soon as the other touches the ground, and the thigh being pressed in to the body and then released, without being held.

This is an excellent suppling exercise, and is strongly to be recommended to those who wish to reduce the size of their abdomen.

As a brisk exercise for cold winter mornings, when you want a vigorous exercise to warm you up and get your circulation going, it has few rivals.

SLEEP.

Most men spend about a third of their lives asleep and take all too little care for their health while they are indulging in it.

I have referred before to the importance of good ventilation in the bedroom and of a clear air passage under and over the bed, and there is no need to repeat what I have said.

But there are other points that are almost equally important.

Many people pull up the blind or draw the curtain in their room before getting into bed, in order that the light may wake them in the morning.

This is a great mistake. Even if there is no moon, and even at this time of year, it is light for some little time before most of us have to get up, and sleep with the light shining in your eyes is as bad as no sleep at all.

The brain is bound to be to a certain extent active even in sleep, unless the room is dark, and thus it does not derive from it the rest it needs.

Over-activity of the brain is one of the principal causes of insomnia, and if it is not produced by outside causes, there is no need to induce it by sleeping in a room that is not sufficiently darkened.

A glass of hot milk sipped slowly, while still hot, just before going to bed is a better sleep-producer than any opiate.

Physical exercises performed just before retiring are also excellent remedies, for they change the supply of blood to the brain and prevent congestion at its base, which is so often the cause of insomnia, headaches, and similar maladies.

A MATTER OF BALANCE.

This trick is by no means difficult to accomplish but it is an excellent exercise for the legs, and the difficulty of retaining the balance is sufficiently great to provide some amusement when anyone is trying it for the first time.

Stand erect on a chair, or a stool without a back, if you have a sufficiently strong one handy, and extend the arms horizontally in front of you.

Good for the leg muscles.

Now transfer all the weight to the right foot, holding the left out in front of you, and bend the right leg so that you sink slowly downwards.

The left leg must be kept quite straight all the time, but the arms may be moved slightly in order to retain the balance. The strain on the leg which bears the weight will, of course, be tremendous, for it has to maintain the balance in both directions, for you are just as likely to go over sideways as forwards.

Then rise, also slowly, and repeat the performance with the other leg.

The thigh and calf muscles are those which profit most, and the exercise cannot be beaten for suppling the leg joints.

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RARE THRILLS.

SOME MOMENTS OF EVERYDAY LIFE THAT ARE WORTH LIVING.

To thousands of men who are cooped up in city offices all day, life is a pretty dreary round, but for every man there are moments when it becomes almost interesting.

There is no doubt that to a man who possesses the true sporting spirit, even everyday working life sometimes affords rare moments of exhilaration.

For instance, have you ever, in the morning, on your way to the office, elected to start a little earlier than usual in order to enjoy the fresh air on the top of a horse 'bus instead of taking a stuffy "tube" or underground train? Of course you have!

Then perhaps you have taken part in an omnibus race.

The long, open, suburban road stretches wide before you, and a hundred yards ahead is a rival 'bus which plies along the same route, and at which your red-faced and jovial Jehu points the finger of scorn and enmity.

"See that perishin' blighter?" he inquires. "Well, 'e allus cuts 'arf a minute or so off 'is 'stops,' so as to be in front o' me; but 'ere goes; I'm goin' to beat 'im!"

And he lashes up his nags with a chirrup of encouragement; and the ramshackle vehicle plunges forward. The driver in front sees it; and he, too, urges on his horses. There is little traffic at that early hour, and both 'busmen confidently attain a high rate of speed.

Little by little, by dint of fresher horses and superior driving, your own 'bus gains on the other; until at last, rocking furiously from side to side, the two dash onward, abreast.

"It's now or never!" mutters your driver, and he calls on his horses for yet another effort. And then, as you pass your rival, and triumphantly sail on ahead, your heart rises within you; and you experience something of the feeling that must have come to the charioteers of ancient Rome in the hour of victory.

This is one of the better moments of everyday existence. Perhaps you have worked late at the office, and on your way home, at say 9.30 or 10, stopped to buy an evening paper from a street vendor. You tender a penny, and wait for your halfpenny change. But the newsvendor is one of the pestilent type—big, brawny, and truculent-looking—who love to overawe peaceable members of the public, if possible.

So he scowls at you, and grunts that he has no halfpennies, hoping that you will let him keep the change. But you refuse to be bullied, and insist on his getting change or giving your money back. Then—for the City streets are now dark and deserted—you suddenly receive a smashing blow in the mouth, and gamely you close with your assailant, though he is bigger, all round, than yourself.

Never mind, you have "grit," and the right on your side, and you are boiling with fury; so that you go for him hammer and tongs. A flush hit in the eye makes you see a whole firmament of stars, but you land him one in the "wind," and follow it up with a cross-counter on the jaw.

Then, perhaps, because he is a bully, or, perhaps because he is afraid that a "bobby" may come along who knows him, your enemy makes off with a curse; and you proceed home with a light-heartedness that neither a "lumpy" eye nor a bleeding mouth can dispel.

Perhaps another day on your way home you pass over a common, where an amateur football team are practising shots at goal, and you are invited to "have a go." You do so; and are delighted to find that you have not lost your "shooting boots" even yet, despite years of "grind."

Or else you take your dog—a mongrel, perhaps, but a good pal for all that—along a river bank, and he startles a water-vole. These are a few of the glad moments of everyday life, but it takes a sportsman to feel the thrill of them.

C. RICHARDSON.

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NATIONAL SHARE EXCHANGE
TO THE
GREAT BRITISH PUBLIC.

The note of every great utterance to the British people at the present time by every responsible leader is—Wake Up! But such an appeal is only made on a statement of the existing—the present—facts. The indisputable facts about the business of the National Share Exchange are that we have paid away **£313,460** to clients. We make money for clients. We lead the way. Others try to follow. Those are the present and indisputable facts, and we are responsible to our clients for future results. Because of this, we appeal to you to wake up to the significance of

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(Please write distinctly.)

DATE .....

A WINTER MORNING'S SPORT.

Last winter I spent a few days with a young farmer friend of mine in the country.

I had thoroughly enjoyed the little shooting parties which he had arranged for my pleasure, and I believe I enjoyed more than ever sitting down to a good meal, and afterwards to yarn and smoke around the great open fireplace where logs spat and spluttered.

We then fired every shot over again, and amid hearty laughter fired off volleys of good-tempered jokes about each other's shooting capabilities or the lack of them.

Tom, my farmer friend, used to go the rounds of his shippens and stables every night to see that all was secure. One night, when he came in, he told me to scamper off to bed, because it was snowing hard, and on the morrow we could go out tracing.

I had no idea what he meant, and undoubtedly my face told him as much, for he said, "What! Haven't you ever been out tracing hares and rabbits when the snow is on the ground?" I replied that I had not.

"Then you have missed a fine sport," said he. "Get off to bed now and have a good night's rest, and if the weather and ground are suitable for tracing I'll give you a call early in the morning."

AN EARLY START.

Next morning, just before six, Tom roused me and said it was an ideal day for our purpose. So out I jumped.

We had our breakfast, put on good thick shooting boots, filled our flasks, and got our guns and cartridges ready. Putting a couple of good sandwiches into our pockets, we lit our pipes, and were off. The ground was covered with a carpet of snow about three or four inches deep, and the sun was just rising behind the tors in the distance.

Tom started off up the hill to where there was a level crossing of an old railway that had been used for hauling minerals from the mines. The railway, like the mines, was now disused.

Down this line Tom started, telling me to keep my eyes open for the track of a hare in the snow, for this was a splendid place to find them; for hares invariably used to travel down the valley from the hills above in search of food, and we should be sure to find the track of one as it crossed the railway.

THE FIRST TRACKS.

I plodded along ankle deep in the pure and unsullied snow, and soon found some tracks, which Tom told me were those of a rabbit. I felt ashamed that I did not know the difference, but Tom told me not to mind, as he felt sure that not one man in twenty in the country could tell a hare's track when they saw it.

Suddenly Tom halted, and I went to him. He was looking intently on the ground, then he looked up and his eyes wandered up the opposite bank of the railway and across the fields beyond.

"What is the matter?" said I, for, stare as I might, I could see nothing unusual. "Hare's tracks," replied he. I thought he had taken leave of his senses, for my eyes were good enough, and there was the snow for yards around us, unbroken, except for our own footprints.

"Where?" I exclaimed. He pointed to the snow just near his foot, but even now I could see nothing.

HOW HE KNEW.

Seeing that I was incredulous, Tom explained. "Do you see that slight depression in the snow?" said he. Now that he particularly pointed it out, I certainly did see it, though what connection it had with a hare's track I didn't know. "Well, a hare passed here while it was still snowing," said he, "and the snow has nearly filled her tracks again."

"Oh!" exclaimed I, "now I see—let's follow her."

"Which way," laughed he, "up the hill or down?"

I confessed my ignorance. "We will soon see," said he, and he knelt down, and with extreme care removed the snow that had fallen into the track after it had been made, and at length showed me the peculiar long narrow track of the hare.

"She was going up when she passed here," said Tom, "so we will go upwards, too." We climbed the bank and got into a large field by the railway.

Striking across this field, we followed the tracks, Tom scarcely looking on the ground once in fifty yards. "How can you follow without looking at the tracks?" I asked.

"Easily enough," replied Tom. "Look at two or three tracks and see where they are heading."

I did so, and saw that the hare had undoubtedly taken a bee-line for a gate in the opposite hedge. I communicated my idea to Tom.

SAVING THE EYES.

"Right," said he; "it is very trying to the eyes to be always staring down at the white snow, therefore I always make my course this way, glancing now and again to see that I am right."

The tracks led us across fields and over hedges, Tom pointing out that the tracks were showing up more plainly as we went along.

Wherever the hare had jumped a hedge, I noticed that Tom invariably got over in a different place and picked up the tracks again on the other side.

Being afraid to show my ignorance again, I refrained from questioning him, trying to think the matter out for myself, but in vain. However, I was soon to learn.

Puss's tracks led us to a particularly high hedge, the top of which was covered with a thick growth of ferns and grasses.

Immediately Tom saw this he left the track as usual, and climbed through a gap about thirty yards below. Walking up to where the hare should have jumped off, he apparently picked up and started off again.

OUT-MANŒUVRING PUSS.

But I could not understand what he was doing, for, stare as I might, not a blessed scratch could I see in the snow. When about fifty yards from the hedge, he wheeled around and came back to the same hedge a few yards below the gap we had climbed through.

"Puss is on the hedge," he whispered. In a moment I realised the wisdom of his tactics. Had we climbed the hedge where puss had jumped up we should have frightened her, and she would have been off and away before we could get a shot. Also had he stopped and spoken near the hedge when he failed to see the tracks puss would have jumped off from the other side.

Tom directed me to get over the hedge again and walk up on that side, and he would go up on this. I did as requested, and presently heard him hitting the growth on the hedge with a stick. Soon I heard a rattle, and off jumped puss into the field where I stood.

With the haste and excitement of a novice I fired, and missed. "Got him?" queried Tom from the other side. "No," I disappointedly replied.

Tom came over, and again we picked up puss's tracks and started off. Through several big fields, along the high road, and on to a path that crossed the moor.

Down this path puss had raced, as was shown by the tremendous leaps she had taken.

Suddenly Tom stopped, and I noticed that the tracks were no longer to be seen down the path.

DIFFICULT WORK.

Casting around in a circle, Tom picked up the tracks again and pointed to where the hare had leapt on to the short furze and heath that covered the moor. Following was more difficult now, for the surface of the snow was broken by tall furze bushes and rocks, but Tom never once halted.

On we tramped for about half a mile, when the tracks led us to the entrance of a disused quarry, the sides of which were grown over with furze. Tom directed me to watch the entrance while he walked round the quarry to see that she had not gone out again.

"She's in there," he whispered, when he had returned. "Stand clear of the entrance, and keep your eyes skinned." He went to the side of the quarry and rolled down a few stones among the furze and bracken. Again disturbed, out came puss, and this time I managed to bag her.

By this time I was hungry, so I ate my sandwiches and took a pull at the flask, and Tom did the same. Lighting our pipes, we started off again, and I noticed that Tom was retracing his steps across the moor.

ANOTHER TRAIL.

"Surely we are not going home yet?" I queried.

"Home!" exclaimed Tom, "not just yet. We will have a try for another first."

"But you are not looking for any tracks," I said.

"I looked for them as I came along this way, and what is more I saw them, too," he replied.

And sure enough, not a hundred yards from where our first hare took the high road he showed me the tracks of a second hare.

Leaving the road, she took us across a field. Suddenly Tom wheeled around and fired apparently at a bunch of dried grass we had passed about thirty paces back.

Going back Tom stooped down and picked up our second hare.

When I went back I silently noted that I had almost stepped on the hare as I walked past, but feeling heartily ashamed of myself I said nothing, but could not but help admiring my ruddy-faced friend.

We then wended our way home, and among my most enjoyable days I count that on which I was initiated into the most fascinating and educating sport of tracing.

H. WOOLCOCK.

KEEPING YOUR HANDS RIGHT.

In this cold weather a man's hands are very liable to get chapped, especially if his work is the best of all work—out-of-doors.

The remedy depends upon the extent of the chaps. If the skin is badly cut it is wise to cover the sore places with a coating of collodion, but in most cases it is quite sufficient to give the hands a course of systematic greasing. The grease you use must be pure, for the flesh is exposed and ready to absorb any dirt that may be contained in the ointment. A penny box of cold cream or vaseline will see you through the winter, so far as your hands are concerned, or you may anoint them with one of the more pleasant ointments that are sold for use after shaving.

Until your hands are better, you should wash them each morning and evening in warm water and give them a good greasing.

Be careful also not to use too much soap until your hands are well again.

To prevent your hands from getting chapped there is nothing to equal wearing a pair of thick warm gloves, either made of wool or with a woollen lining.

BUSINESS IS BUSINESS

A WEEKLY FEATURE.

BUSINESS STRENGTH.

There is more in the study of emotion, of sentiment, and of character than the business-man generally imagines.

Too often he is inclined to think that if he transacts his business on the conventional lines laid down by custom, he is doing all in the way of attaining success that he ought to do.

Very often he attains success by working on these lines, but he never attains very much of it.

Unquestionably, there is a characteristic which I feel justified in describing as business strength, and it is one which we may detect in every man who has made his business a success.

It exists both in the employer and in the employee.

In the case of the employee, the business strength is, perhaps, even more necessary than in the case of the employer, for he has farther to go.

I should say that the first essential for an employee to observe is the elimination of his own immediate likes and dislikes, where they clash with the needs of his employer's business. At a time of pressure, an appointment that has been eagerly looked forward to may have to be put off, and the wise employee does not even mention to his employer that he is putting off this appointment; he simply puts it off and says nothing about it. You do not detect in his manner the fact that he has an unspoken grievance against you.

Business strength is, to a large extent, business wisdom. If there is pressure, the employee realises that this pressure is necessary, and appreciates the fact that, although he is not reaping the largest share of the profits he yet depends for his bread-and-butter upon the particular business in question, and he knows that, in the event of the collapse of this business, he would find himself in a very uncomfortable position.

Realising these things, he sticks at his business hard, and the employer readily sees that his interests and those of the other coincide exactly.

When an employee gives his chief the feeling that he can rely upon him absolutely, and even in points that are quite outside ordinary business routine, there springs up a confidence that not only makes for the success of the business, but also improves the prospects of the employee in question.

There is another item of business strength so far as it concerns the employee, and that is that he should take steps to see that he progresses as he ought to do in the matter of money.

It is for him to judge whether he is worth more money than he is getting; and if he considers that he is, he ought to give his chief a gentle and diplomatic reminder, for the man who asks not is more frequently neglected than appreciated.

It is less easy to generalise concerning strength in an employer.

First and foremost, he has the mother-wit or common-sense that has been born with him; also, he has the experience acquired in his period of probation with other firms; and, perhaps chief of all, he possesses what may be called firmness or will power. Unpleasant things have to be done, and work has to be undertaken against his inclinations, but he forces into the background his natural laziness and all other qualities that might militate against him.

He aims not for an immediate pleasure, but for a future one, and that might also be said of the employee who is possessed of business strength.

R. A. MACNAUGHTEN.

FINANCE.

(In this column we place at the service of our readers the advice of our Financial Editor. It must be strictly understood, however, that we accept no responsibility for any opinions he may express.—EDITOR.)

THE STOCK MARKETS.

Americans have been bullish and are likely to advance further. But markets generally, while firm, have not been busy, nor can much business be expected at this time of the year. The Jungle market is likely to be very good. The buying is not by any means to be gauged by what is represented. The extent is much greater. This is significant, and a good tip.

OUTSIDE AND INSIDE BROKERS.

We hold no brief for anyone, but some people seem to have got it into their heads that the outside broker has no right to do business. The real trouble is that he competes all too successfully with the members of the Stock Exchange.

It is a case of incapacity that would like to kill when it cannot compete. The Stock Exchange is a monopoly, and 75 per cent. of its business is speculation.

If you gamble with an outside broker, you know the tape price at a certain time. But gamble with an inside broker, and he is not called upon to prove the price at which he has bought or sold (nor called on to prove whether he actually bought or sold the stock) for you—you must take his word for it.

A PLEA FOR FAIR PLAY.

We like to see fair play, but the mention of outside brokers acts on some writers, or papers which do not get their advertisements, like a red rag to a bull.

In a recent case before the Recorder, an action was brought by a Miss Isabel Wilkin, of Gateshead, against Messrs. R. A. Smith and Co., stock and share dealers, of Broad Street House, E.C., for £56, which the plaintiff claimed was due to her as the result of certain stock and share transactions with the defendants. The jury found a verdict for the plaintiff for £4, without costs.

The deal in question was an option, a common transaction on the Stock Exchange, and a gamble whether with an inside or outside broker. But the fact which creates prejudice in some minds against the latter is that he is allowed to advertise and circularise generally.

Apropos, the foreman of the jury remarked that "such notices (circulars) really tended to persuade people to send money to the person advertising." Really, and how shocking! What business firm isn't equally guilty?

However, in common justice let it be said that it takes two people to make a gambling transaction; that, though the Gaming Act was mentioned, the case was tried on its merits; that R. A. Smith & Co. took delivery of shares from the Stock Exchange; and that they have never previously in their twenty-one years of business had a case before the courts, much less pleaded the Gaming Act.

F. W., R. M., and W. H.—Accept nothing on account; don't extend; and insist on a full settlement.

S. H. (Bow).—The National Share Exchange are sure payers.

EQUITABLE EXCHANGE.—R. L. (Lingfield)—*Sub judice* yet.

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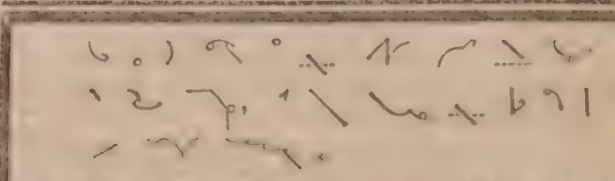

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EACH OF THESE STORIES IS COMPLETE IN ITSELF.

THE KING OF KNAVES

By E. WADE LANG.

IV. A WINNING TRICK.

It was shortly after three o'clock in the afternoon when there came a tinkling at the telephone connected between my rooms and Ferris's flat below.

I had not seen him since morning, but he had then given me enough secretarial work to last me the greater portion of the day.

"You there, Burke?" came his voice. "Come along down, will you? I've got news."

A tremor went through me. Already I was beginning to experience the perpetual expectation of discovery, which I am persuaded underlies the mind of nearly every criminal.

But the sight of Ferris was reassuring. There was a smile on his face as he opened his door to me, and a briskness in his manner which could only come from cheerfulness.

"Squat down, old chap," said he, wheeling forward an arm-chair. "I've got quite a humorous little narrative for you.

"You'll have heard of the Mord torpedo, the useful contrivance which is to enable the British Navy to blow up all and sundry, should future occasion make it necessary. Well, of course you have! The enterprising Press have been shaking the fist of triumph at our rivals across the water for the last fortnight because of it. Sit tight, then, for a sensation. The plans of the Mord torpedo, Burke, have been stolen from the Admiralty this very day."

Seated on a corner of the table, swinging a leg, he took full enjoyment of my astonished stare.

"What on earth made you do a thing like that?" I exclaimed at last.

"I, Burke?" His brows arched. "I didn't say *I* had stolen them. Gracious me! what an idea! But I'll tell you all about it. There isn't much time, as I'll explain presently, so the tale must be brief.

"The invention, you know, has been receiving the earnest consideration of the Admiralty, which means that first one gentleman and then another has passed a more or less ignorant opinion on it and afterwards handed it on to another official of similar intelligence. In the end the documents came to rest in the office of my respected father, the Earl, who, I need not inform you, is one of the chiefs in that particularly efficient Government department. That was a few days ago.

"Now, the guv'nor may have his failings as a private individual, but he is a stickler for promptitude in the performance of public duties. Obviously, the first thing to do was to appoint a committee, with himself as chairman, to inquire into the merits of this weapon of destruction. Nothing is ever done by the guv'nor without due regard for pomp and circumstance.

"The committee met to-day. Yes; I was there. I am as much interested in the thing as anybody. All were assembled, and everything was ready for impressive deliberation—everything except the plans. The guv'nor sat at his desk, coughed for silence, opened a drawer—and then his jaw dropped.

"I have never seen dismay so comical before. For a minute or two he searched all about the desk without speaking. Then he told us in a horrified voice that the plans had been in his hands ten minutes ago, but that they weren't to be found now.

"Hell and Tommy ruled for a while. After a spell of incoherence the guv'nor was able to tell us that he had been examining them just before we came in, and had only popped them into a drawer while he went to wash his hands. In those few moments they had vanished."

"And you—where were you?" I asked, fully satisfied that I knew the author of the mystery.

Ferris went grave, and he bent forward to give more significance to his words.

"Granting that no mistake had been made in the time, I was walking down Whitehall when the theft took place."

"Then how the deuce did you manage it?" I asked, prepared to believe even a miracle if he laid claim to one.

His reply was unexpected. He stood up suddenly, and there was a flush on his face.

"Confound you!" he said. "I didn't." The next moment he had covered the temper with a laugh. "I beg your pardon. It was, after all, a natural assumption. No; I assure you," he went on seriously, "I no more know who bagged them than you do. They wouldn't be of the slightest use to me, and even if they were it would make no difference. Whatever pranks we may play for our own edification, Burke, with us, as with every Britisher, I hope, it is country first.

"That torpedo, from what I know of it," he continued, "is of inestimable value to the Navy. It would be little short of a national calamity for the plans to get into the possession of our rivals. That is why I am going to make an honest use of my intelligence for once in the endeavour to get them back."

"You are!" I cried, with an eagerness intensified by the knowledge of his own innocence. "By the saints, it's good to hear you say so."

"Your enthusiasm does you credit," he returned dryly. "I can, then, rely upon your whole-hearted support. We are off to Portsmouth as soon as Bennett comes round with the car." He glanced at the clock. "He'll be here in a minute. I told him three-thirty."

"Portsmouth—by motor?" I queried, getting to my feet.

"Yes; ostensibly a pleasure outing, you see. Possibly the car may be useful when we get there. The affair is a close secret so far. The Admiralty is not anxious for its incompetence to become known, neither is my respected pater. As I told you, I don't know how the plans were taken, though it is clear it must have been by someone on the premises—probably a person whose scruples have been overcome by a heavy bribe.

"The guv'nor's office leads out of a corridor and has a couple of other doors, communicating with other offices not always occupied. Whoever the thief was, he had an admirable gift for the right moment.

"That can pass. What is of chief importance is that I think I have a pretty good notion as to the identity of the gentleman who has engineered this business."

"Whom do you suspect?" I queried.

"Suspect! My dear Burke, the term reminds me unpleasantly of the detective of fiction. This isn't a question of suspicion. It's a matter of one criminal intelligence having insight into the methods of another. Those plans will change hands to-night, or I'm a Dutchman. So long as they are in this country the scheme is only half accomplished.

"Now, cut up to your rooms and stow enough into a bag to last you for one night at a hotel. You'll want a fur coat on for travelling. I'll be ready and waiting for you when you come down."

He gave me an encouraging clap on the shoulder, and I went off with all the zest of a boy setting out on a glorious adventure.

II.

During the journey down, which was covered at illegal speed, Ferris would talk of anything but his intentions when we reached our destination. However, I was getting accustomed to these attacks of reticence when action was pending, and I attempted no cross-examination.

We were in Portsmouth within three hours, and Ferris instructed the chauffeur to drive direct to the General Post Office. He would not have me accompany him inside, and was absent about ten minutes.

When he reappeared he gave another order to the chauffeur and got in beside me with a subdued laugh.

"Luck supreme!" he whispered. "With detection as easy as this, Burke, I'm beginning to think we shall have to chuck up our immoral game. I've found him, as sure as the Day of Judgment."

"The man who stole the plans?"

"Better. The man who will receive them."

"But how?" I asked, impatiently.

His reply was enigmatic, as it always was when that impish twinkle shone in his eye.

"When a prince of a certain Royal house you wot of, old boy, is cruising incognito in our waters, simultaneously with the disappearance of precious documents, it's all Hades to a lucifer that there is affinity between the incidents. Now, our Royal friend's yacht is off Southsea, and has been for several days past, and von Vonderberger——"

"Von Vonderberger!" I echoed.

"——is his distinguished deputy in this diplomatic intrigue. There are more ways of securing an ambassadorship, Burke, than presenting one's sovereign with a priceless jewel. Apropos, it would be a sin to have that wonderful stone cut up, and, as we can't dispose of it unless we do, we must preserve it as a memento of our first offence together.

"Yes; Vonderberger left town the other day, and trifling apprehensions as to what he might be up to led me to ascertain where he had gone. To Portsmouth, to confer with his august master's relative. Then this accident to the plans, combined with what we know of his ambition, and I think you will see how I came to decide that where Vonderberger was, there would the plans go also.

"As it happens, I was right. By the courtesy of the postmaster I have been able to see the copy of a telegram sent to Vonderberger from London this evening, and it said ——" His hand gripped my knee. "——'Arriving nine.'"

"Signed?"

"Unsigned. It was addressed to Sea View Hotel, Southsea, and it's to that hotel Bennett is driving us now."

"To confront Vonderberger?"

In truth, the prospect of facing those gimlet eyes again was far from attractive.

"To have dinner with him, if it's not too late," said Ferris, with a chuckle.

A slight jar of the brakes, the scrape of tyres on the road, and we had drawn up level with the lighted entrance to the hotel.

I caught Ferris's sleeve as he was rising.

"What have I got to do? You never say. You always——"

His steady, penetrating gaze checked me.

"I don't know myself. It's a game where we wait for the other man's lead." He sank his voice to the winning key there was no resisting. "But, whatever comes, you're with me, Burke?"

I nodded, and for a moment our hands clasped. Then we passed into the hotel.

* * * * * * *

Ferris came back to where I was awaiting him in the lounge, and his gratification was manifest.

"I've got the suite of rooms next to his," said he, "thanks to its being the off-season. The beggar's now in the dining-room. We'll go and join him. Just unconcerned—and a hint of surprise when we see him; that's our cue. Be a bit gloomy with the toothache if you're not sure of yourself."

The head waiter was fussing to find us a table to ourselves when Ferris's eye lit on Vonderberger, who glanced down the instant he was perceived.

But Ferris was not the man to allow a friend to go ungreeted.

"Why, it's you!" said he cordially. "No idea you were down here. Burke and I—you know Burke?—have been touring round the locality for a day or two."

He gradually sank into a chair as he chatted, and there we were, established on an amiable footing, as the most natural thing in the world.

Beyond a sudden gleam of the gimlet eyes when we approached, and a momentary compression of the lips above the grey, pointed beard, Vonderberger's reception of us was courtesy itself.

For three-quarters of an hour Ferris was the fascinating conversationalist that he could be when he chose. One of his first questions was about the stolen jewel, and he was delighted to hear that its recovery and the capture of the criminal were imminent.

As time went on, even Vonderberger's mastery of features could not conceal that he was growing ill at ease. He wanted to get away, but palpably he wished to do so without making a point of it. We rose as he rose, and accompanied him out to the lounge.

Ferris proposed a game of billiards, and Vonderberger declined; he had some letters to write. Ferris also had some letters to write; but at least he must have a smoke first, and so must we all.

There was no escape, and it was now past eight o'clock. Ferris offered his cigar-case to Vonderberger and to me, and named our requirements to the waiter.

I could not tell whether our companion had arranged to meet his confederate at the station or at the hotel, but it seemed that Ferris imagined the latter, and that he had determined to be a witness of the meeting. In that case he would be bound to recognise the visitor, and no doubt the reality of this was making Vonderberger more and more anxious, for he could not help being aware of Ferris's father's connection with the Admiralty.

Only a few minutes had gone by, however, when Vonderberger got up, declaring that he felt unwell and must retire to his room. That the strain had told on him I could see, for his face was clouded and his walk unsteady.

Ferris watched him depart, and there was a steely glitter in his eyes. Almost as soon as Vonderberger was out of sight he followed.

"Stay here," he told me. "He may be going out."

I had to obey, because Ferris gave no reason, and for nearly half an hour I sat fuming with conjecture. Was Ferris interviewing Vonderberger in his room? Had the latter slipped out by a side door, with Ferris after him? He could not leave by the front exit without my seeing, because from where I sat I could see everybody that came or went. If Ferris's judgment had not miscarried, the time for the arrival of the visitor was almost at hand. And I was ignorant of all that was going on, and becoming oppressed with all sorts of misgivings.

I had worked myself up to a state of restless pacings up and down the hall when a turn brought me face to face with—Vonderberger!

"I want a wordt with you, Mr. Burke, if you will allow me," he said, in his careful English, and there was an expression on his face that was new to me.

"As many as you like," said I, with a readiness that I by no means felt. I did not like the peculiar ring in his voice.

He wheeled and proceeded with military precision to the far seat of the lounge, only pausing to remind the hall-porter that when the gentleman he was expecting arrived he was to be conducted forthwith to him.

He seated himself with his back to the light and indicated a chair for me.

Instinct told me that something had gone wrong, and that there was peril in store for me.

"Your clever friendt," said he with a distinct sneer, "has over-reached himself this time."

"I don't understand you," said I.

"Oh, yes, you do," he corrected smoothly. "You know what you came down to Portsmouth to findt out and what you expectedt to get from me. You never guessed, perhaps, that I might findt out something about you; eh?"

My blood ran cold. In his tone was a wealth of insinuation that there was no mistaking.

"My good sir," said I, "you're talking through your hat, to put it vulgarly. What on earth could we expect to get from you?"

"The plans," he answered, bending forward and whispering.

I stared long at him, and, as it seemed to me, his eyes were fiendishly exulting. What had become of Ferris? Nay, what had he *done* to Ferris?

"Look here!" said I, feeling anger against him beginning to burn in me. "What are you driving at? Talk out."

He bent an inch nearer, and the whisper concentrated.

"Shall I talk out about the Innismallah diamond?" said he.

To say that I was astounded would be inept. I was staggered. I gaped at him, at the evil, taunting smile on his face, and all at once a conviction that harm had come to Ferris made me mad with rage and reckless. If Ferris had been discovered I cared nothing for myself.

With an oath I raised my clenched fist, but before I could let him have it, his eyebrows had gone up, an extraordinary transformation had taken place in his expression, and he was laughing at me.

"You Irishman!" said he, said Ferris, false beard and all, and the most marvellous counterpart of the original it is possible to conceive.

"By all my soul!" I vociferated, and would have said more only that he frowned me into silence, and glanced over his shoulder.

"Listen," said he. "Vonderberger is upstairs in bed, dead asleep. It was the cigar. You didn't observe, but I gave you one out of the other side of the case. I foresaw this contingency, even before we started, and brought the necessary props with me. I've made a study of this kind of thing. You may have more evidence of it later on."

A ghost of a smile, and he continued more rapidly.

"Now, this fellow may be here any moment—I hope to heaven he won't be late—and while I talk to him you must go up to our room—Vonderberger's is on your right as you enter—and, if you hear the least sound of his moving—you must bolt down here to me. You've got that fixed?"

His sharp and stern voice brought back my wandering senses. I nodded.

"He ought to sleep for hours, but you can never tell. I shall interview the visitor here, whether he likes it or not, and as soon as I'm free I shall come up to you, get out of this make-up, and—mark this!—we sleep in London to-night. Vonderberger will never connect us with the matter, and if he does will never dare to say so. Patriotism, like charity, covers a multitude of sins. A—h!"

The porter was approaching.

Vonderberger-cum-Ferris rose and walked briskly towards the hall. Even at that moment I found time to admire the perfection of his stiff, military gait, so unlike the indolent grace of Ferris ordinarily.

I went upstairs.

The minutes crept by with leaden slowness. With my watch in my hand and my ear to the wall, I stood, every nerve drawn tight with suspense. Yet through it all there was one warm, consoling thought in my mind. We were acting in the interests of our country—we were adventuring *honestly*.

The door opened at last, and I swung round like lightning. For an instant my heart stopped. The disguise was so convincing that I could not tell whether it was Vonderberger or not.

"Wait a sec," he said, and the twinkle in the eye was Ferris's. He disappeared, and I got to the door in time to see him noiselessly entering the adjoining room.

He was out again almost instantly, and his brows knitted when he found me watching.

"Get back," he hissed, and that was all he said until we were descending the stairs, our caps and motor-coats on, ready for departure.

"If you will take one peep out of the corner of your eye," said he, "you will see the traitorous gentleman still waiting."

I caught a glimpse of a man muffled to the ears in a great-coat, and then we were in the hall, and Ferris was settling the bill at the office.

Our light luggage was brought out and placed in the car, and we glided silently away.

"You've got them?" said I in a burst.

"I have, Burke."

"Splendid. It will be an immense relief to your father."

"It will."

"He'll be jolly proud of you."

"He won't have the chance. I shall post them to the Admiralty anonymously, and the supposition will be that the thief has repented. No, thanks; I have no desire to pose as a hero."

"But you are one," I insisted. "The whole affair is a distinct credit to you."

His low, dare-devil chuckle came again, mystifying me.

"My dear old chap," said he; "you will think it even more creditable when I tell you that I have paid ourselves £5,000 for our trouble.

I turned and stared.

"The reward, man," he whispered. "Saints alive, you don't expect these things are done for nothing.

"'And now the money,' said our visitor after he had handed over the boodle (No; I sha'n't tell you his name).

"'Let me see, what was the figure,' said I, as cunning as you like.

"He informed me, and was of opinion it was little enough. I agreed, though I didn't admit it to him. It is paltry, considering all things. Well, I went upstairs to get it, and that was why I paid another call upon our slumbering 'friendt' Vonderberger.

"And meanwhile the visitor waits. Ah, well, it's a disappointing world, Burke."

[*Another of these stories will appear next week.* —EDITOR.]

KEEPING THE STABLE WARM.

The builders of stables generally make sure that they are wind- and water-tight, but they do not always consider whether they will be sufficiently warm in cold weather.

When you go into many a stable on a frosty night you find the place cold and uncomfortable, with the frost showing on the lower side of the tiles that cover the roof. You can keep the horse warm by rugging him well up, but, though one rug helps to make a horse's coat smooth and glossy, it does not conduce to his health to put many upon him. Horses are like people in this respect, for every man knows that he does not feel so fit when he has too many clothes on.

The simplest way to make a chilly stable comfortable is to cover the roof on the outside with straw. It need not necessarily be new straw. That which you can rake out from old bedding will do perfectly well.

Lay it above the tiles longways, so that each straw lies exactly as the rain would trickle in the event of a wet night. When you have covered the roof with straw in this manner, lay a few long boards across to keep the straw from being blown away should a storm come.

One might suppose that this layer of straw would hold the water and make it sink between the tiles and into the stable, but it does not really do so. If you arrange the straw in the way directed, you will find that the water trickles down between the separate straws and reaches the bottom of the roof almost as quickly as it would have done had the straw not been there.

On a frosty morning you will find the top layer of straw covered with white hoar frost, but you will not find any frost showing on the inside of the tiles, and the temperature of the stable will be infinitely higher.

Don't forget, however, that even on the coldest night the stable needs ventilation. Warmth that is obtained by simply closing up all openings to the air will have a most injurious effect on the horse's health.

WHEN A MAN'S SINGLE

HOW TO ACHIEVE COMFORT IN DIGS.

When a man's single he has to do without a good many creature comforts which are popularly supposed to be the happy perquisite, so to speak, of the married man.

He must fend for himself or trust to the thoughtfulness or otherwise of his landlady.

Life in digs, even of the more expensive kind, leaves much to be desired, for a landlady, even though she be of the superior sort, does not exactly radiate home!

But the bachelor, if he will take the trouble, can do a good deal to make single life livable while waiting for the advent of the eternal feminine who is to make things better—or worse!

Here are a few suggestions to that end.

Be methodical and have a place for everything.

Instead of that untidy row of boots and shoes under the bed, where they get kicked from one side to the other, just fix up a cupboard out of an empty sugar box; put a shelf in across the middle and nail a piece of serge or cretonne over it, and keep your footgear which is not in daily use in it.

Thus your boots are out of the way and free from dust, and not likely (unless you put them away wet) to get mildewed or covered with blue mould, as they do if you utilise that receptacle known as the bottom cupboard, which is the usual rubbish-hole of all living in digs.

A USEFUL RECEPTACLE.

The best place for hair brushes and combs is a contrivance which you can make yourself, or if you don't feel equal to it, ask your best girl to do it for you.

Get a large sheet of cardboard and cover it with some glazed calico. Then stitch two separate pieces of the same material right across to form pockets.

Fasten a loop at each side of the top, and hang it on the wall at a convenient height. Get another piece of calico and stitch it to the top of the frame to fall down and form a curtain.

Put your brushes and combs into one of the pockets, and nail-scissors, loose buttons, reels of cotton and needles into the others, and when you want anything, you have only to lift the curtain and there you are! It is a much better plan than hunting in a drawer.

Fix a little rack over the back of your washstand—you can make it out of bits of wood and odds and ends of wire—and hang your sponge, tooth brushes, loofah, and so on upon it.

FOR ODDS AND ENDS.

A shelf just above it is a regular boon. Here you can keep your blacking, the metal polish for your uniform or bike, your hair wash, tooth paste, plaster, and all the rest out of the way and yet get-at-able in a second.

Always have a few extra studs in a saucer on the dressing-table, and then you won't have to hunt for one when the beastly thing with inanimate malice dives into a corner out of reach and defies you.

There is one thing which the chap in digs has to put up with (unless he buys his own coal and keeps it under lock and key), and that is a poor fire.

It doesn't matter whether you pay a sum which includes fuel, or are charged separately for it in the weekly bill, the fire is ever a bone of contention with the lady of the house.

Well, here are a few tips as to how to circumvent her.

Brown paper soaked in water, then squeezed out and made into balls, and put judiciously among the coals, will keep the fire in wonderfully. Old newspapers can be used in the same way.

Never throw away orange peel; you can coax a smoky, sullen fire into a cheerful blaze by means of bits of dried orange peel, besides filling the room with a pleasant fragrance.

If you happen to go into strange digs and are not certain of your landlady's thoroughness, test the sheets of your bed before getting into it.

A good old-fashioned test is to put a glass tumbler between the sheets. If there is any moisture on the glass when you withdraw it, the sheets have not been aired, so get between the blankets for safety's sake. If, on the contrary, the glass remains dry, the linen is all right.

Many a chap finds his laundry bill a serious item. He may minimise it if he washes his socks at home himself. The process is a very easy one and the veriest tyro need not hesitate to attempt it.

WASHING SOCKS.

Remember the following directions and the socks almost wash themselves.

For black ones use tepid water, and make a soap lather—never rub the soap into the articles—and finally rinse in cold water.

For white or light-tinted ones put a little blue in the water. All fast dyes will wash in tepid water.

For drying them, the plan adopted by a fellow-clerk of mine, who was a neat, dapper fellow on a very small screw, may be copied. He used to do a lot of his own washing, and for this purpose he put up a light cord across the ceiling of his room, and hung his clothes there to dry during his absence.

The cleaning of his own gloves is another domestic item that the bachelor can accomplish for himself with the aid of a little petrol or benzine. They only need to be soaked in the spirit and slightly rinsed, and they come out as spotless as if they had been sent to a dry cleaner's.

ECONOMY IN BOOTS.

A capital way of utilising old boots that are too shabby to wear, and yet too good to throw away, is to make them waterproof, and put them on for dark, rainy nights.

The waterproofing may be made with equal parts of linseed oil, suet, and beeswax, and a trifle more common oil boiled and well mixed together, and spread on the boots while tolerably hot.

The bachelor who lives in what is known as a combined room has one decided advantage over the one who patronises "furnished apartments"—he is not wholly at the mercy of the landlady as regards cooking.

The bed-sitting room is usually provided with a gas-ring; or, if not, it is easy to get a portable spirit lamp, and, with a small enamelled frying-pan, kettle, and saucepan, a fellow can do his own cooking—indeed, it is possible to turn out a meal which an epicure would not despise.

A certain acquaintance of mine did more with these simple utensils. He used to give little suppers that filled his richer pals with positive envy.

To sum up, a man can be just as comfortable, if he tries, in digs as in a house of his own, and he has not the responsibilities.

LEONARD P. MORTON.

SOMETHING FOR YOUR OWN ROOM.

Owing to the great demand for our art plate of Mr. Stanley L. Wood's famous picture, we have prepared another limited edition of it.

This picture has been associated with the fortunes of "The Modern Man" from the outset, and it is a dashing sporting study that is exactly what you want for your "den."

The size of these plates is 25½ inches by 19½ inches, and there is not a word of printed matter on them. They are eminently suitable for framing.

The price is 1/-, post free. The pictures will be sent out in cardboard tubes to prevent creasing.

All applications must be addressed to the Art Department, "The Modern Man" Offices, Westinghouse Building, Strand, London.

BRIEF REPLIES.

[In this column, the Editor, his staff, and contributors endeavour to answer all inquiries of general interest. No fee whatsoever is accepted. Where a prompt reply is required a stamped addressed envelope should be enclosed.]

T. S. (Peterborough).—Don't make a habit of physicking your dog. If you attend to his grub and give him plenty of exercise he'll be all right.

R. H. (Sheffield).—Breeches and stockings, not leggings, are the things to wear when you go to a meet of the harriers. You've got to run, remember, and you wan't to run with ease and speed.

A. R. (Manchester).—Secure the help of the assistant in the reference department of your local library. Books are his business, and he can help you more than all the catalogues and indexes ever published. We have always found these assistants most obliging whenever we have had occasion to appeal to them.

T. B. A. (Warrington).—Your trouble is that you buy your gloves half a size too small. Get them big enough for you and be comfortable. Buying gloves and shoes too small for comfort is a girl's game.

"HERTFORDSHIRE."—It is customary to wear beneath a kilt a garment called trews, especially if ladies are present.

J. J. (Holmfirth).—You needn't go to the expense of a pair of solid gold sleeve-links if you don't want to. Those made of mother-o'-pearl are every bit as fashionable, and cost only a fraction of the price.

R. LUMBERS (41, Highfield Street, Leicester) has organised a MODERN MAN League Harrier Club in his district, and wants other League members who care for cross-country work and live in the district to communicate with him with a view to joining. We wish the club all good luck.

"CURB" (Peebles).—If your horse won't go pleasantly in a curb, stick to the snaffle you have been in the habit of riding him with. Some horses never will take to a curb bit, and play you a variety of tricks if you force them to have one.

A. P. K. (Johannesburg).—Many thanks for photos. You don't say what the uniform is. Surely you haven't Territorials out there?

W. E. S. (Southampton).—Of course we don't think boxing brutal; as we have said several times, it is one of our own favourites in the way of recreation.

F. C. (Salisbury).—Such jobs as sanitary inspectorships are extremely difficult to get. Owing to the enterprise of advertising tutors, there are many more applicants than vacancies. Drop the idea.

R. S. A. (Sydenham).—You comment, with reason, on the fact that London has only two halfpenny evening papers, while many provincial cities with a fiftieth of London's population have as many. You also think the two we have are no better than they might be, and that we ourselves could produce something much more up to date. Give us time.

H. W. (Berwick).—If you cannot get your boots to take the polish you want, tree them and leave them for a day or two in a warm room, but not near the fire. You will be able to polish them all right after that.

J. MARTIN (25, Church Street, Newtown, Sydney, New South Wales) would like to correspond with someone in this country. From the letter he sends us he seems to be one of the best.

H. W. (ss. Whorlton).—Many thanks for the address of that newsagent who doesn't get our poster with his weekly supply of papers; we shall see to it that he has one in future. Nothing helps us so much as having our posters outside newsagents' shops. Those readers who want to do us a good turn, please note.

R. E. F. (Walsall).—We cannot undertake to criticise manuscripts in this column. We receive several hundreds in a week, and the demand on our space would be too great.

C. R. W. (Harringay).—The article you refer to was entitled "How to Excel at Billiards," and appeared in No. 16.

P. D. B. (Manchester).—You want to know too much. Ask another.

BILLIARD TIPS

SOME VERY PRACTICAL HINTS.

Why is it that the average amateur billiard player is so much inferior proportionately to the professional cueist than the amateur at any other sport is to the professor thereof? This is a question which has been asked over and over again, but it has never yet been satisfactorily answered.

But I feel fairly confident that I am hitting the right nail on the head when I say that the professional billiard player's superiority is the result of his early training. From the start, he perfects himself in each new stroke or step before attempting a fresh one, and consequently he does not suffer from the great drawback common to almost every amateur of "not being able to do that stroke" or "having no patience to learn the other," and so on, and so forth.

I have been asked by the Editor to give for the benefit of his billiard-playing readers a few tips which will be of use to them in perfecting their game; and though the space at my disposal is limited I will do the best I can.

HOW TO STAND.

First of all, dear reader, can you stand at the table properly? A good general tip to follow is that the left foot should be as nearly as possible pointing at the cue ball, and the body in a semi-crouching position, so as to allow of one's getting "well behind" the stroke, as the saying is.

Some people, mostly amateurs who fancy themselves, talk about "looking along the cue," and so forth; but this, unless practised only to a very moderate extent, is a fallacy. Getting behind the stroke, however, is a matter of great importance.

Another great point which very few beginners ever master without proper coaching from a professional is the art of holding their cue properly.

In the first place, the left hand should be laid flat on the table, and the knuckles gradually raised until, with the thumb, they form a comfortable bridge.

This should in the ordinary way—I am not talking of screw shots, for if I did, the subject would, of course, fill a good-sized book—be about a foot away from the cue-ball. You often see incompetent players with only about an inch or two of cue between their bridge and the ball, but this is one of the most glaring errors that it is possible to make.

HOLDING.

Now, having got thus far, you should pay attention to the way in which your right hand is holding the butt end of the cue. And here I wish to sound a strong note of warning.

Do not on any account try to imitate any great professional as observed from a photograph or a casual glance during the course of a match, when you have not enough time, of course, to follow his movements with sufficient attention.

Just as you cannot learn cricket by imitating the postures of prominent players as seen in photographs, so you cannot hope to play billiards correctly by the same methods. This is a fact that there is no evading.

The butt end of the cue should be held lightly, about six or eight inches from the end, the thumb tucked well under, to form with the fingers a kind of loop; and—bear this well in mind—there should be a long, easy swing of the arm from the shoulder. There should be no little pettifogging jerks from the elbow—just an easy long swing, and the stroke should be well followed through, in practically the same way that a golfer follows through a strong drive.

You will often notice, when a good player has finished his stroke, that the tip of his cue will rest for a moment on the table. This is the result of a correct follow through.

Again, many amateurs spend their time bewailing the fact that they cannot use the rest properly. Now, if they remember to rest their cue always on the broad side of the rest, and to hold the butt well up to their body, they will find that their strokes with the rest will improve 50 per cent. in a very short space of time.

HALF-BALL STROKES.

Another great point that most amateurs miss is the importance of practising half-ball strokes. It is a safe statement to make that at least 33 per cent. of the shots in a match are half-ball strokes, so that in neglecting them you are throwing a lot away.

The chief points for a beginner to remember might be summed up as follows:

1. Obtain, if possible, the advice and instruction of a professional.
2. Learn to stand properly.
3. Learn to hold your cue properly.

Lastly, if you are going to take up billiards under the instruction of a professional, try as far as possible to forget all you ever knew—or thought you knew! A good instructor would much sooner take in hand a man who had never even seen a billiard-table than an amateur who fancied his game, for the simple reason that wrong ideas are so difficult to eradicate.

CHARLES ROBERTS.

VILLAGE LIFE.

The townsman is beginning to realise the fact that the village has much to offer him as a place of residence.

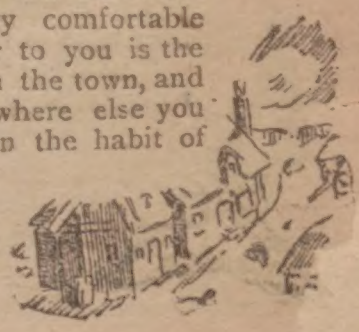
Train services are being improved, and the time spent in travelling to and from his work is lessened. Even on those lines which still serve their patrons badly there is no sound reason against residing in the village, for you can work or read in the train, and the time passed in travelling need not be time wasted.

In fact, in a village with a bad train service there is more charm than in one that is well served, for the former retains its old-world attractions, while the latter is rapidly filled up with other town workers like yourself.

A village which consists chiefly of town workers is not a very attractive place. Certainly its air is better than that in the city, but you are meeting in your leisure time exactly the same type of people that you come across during your daily labours. It is different when you live in a real old country village, for there you meet types different in all respects from those you have been mingling with.

There is the village know-all, who will instruct you on anything from dealings on the Stock Exchange to political problems and the latest aspects of aviation; there are the village comedians; there is even the village idiot, with his capacity for drinking a pint of beer at one draught, and the other little eccentricities that make him a character.

At present there is a movement in most large towns for forming so-called garden cities and residential suburbs. The inhabitants thereof are whisked to their work in electric cars or rapid trains in a very short space of time. Sites are cheap, and comfortable villas with low rents are run up. These suburbs are very comfortable places of residence, but next door to you is the man who works next door to you in the town, and on the station platform and everywhere else you meet the type of people you are in the habit of meeting in your working hours.



The Outer Man

A WEEKLY FEATURE.

Conducted by
CAPTAIN L. H. SAUNDERS.

TWISTED TIES.

Once, in curiosity, I took my penknife and stripped asunder a tie which had become too frayed to wear, and I was amazed at the internal construction of it.

There was a bit of fluffy white material roughly shaped and covered over with the silk, and this was supposed to keep the tie in its original form.

It had done so for a considerable time, but at last the various stretchings that I had given that tie in twining it about my neck had proved too much for the underneath lining, and one end of the tie had deliberately twisted round until it became impossible for me to make a respectable knot with it.

I referred the matter to the opinion of a lady friend—by the way, I have always found the opinions of the ladies very useful in matters of clothes, and commend, as I have frequently done, all my readers to consult their women-folk when they are in difficulties.

She used several technical terms which I forget, but she told me that the twisting of the tie was due to the different stretching power of the silk and the other stuff.

I was so much impressed that I handed over to her several other ties which showed an inclination to twisting, and she put them right.

She told me that she had cured some of them simply by pressing them with a hot iron, and others she had been obliged to open out and restitch, but the result was what I wanted, and I recommend the process to those who may have twisted ties, for a twisted tie is an execrable nuisance.

FLEECE OVERCOATS.

The overcoat that is undoubtedly most fashionable just now for the young man, especially if he has an athletic figure to carry it off, is the so-called fleece overcoat.

Its material is similar to the "blanket" overcoat which is affected by tennis players, and to which I have referred on this page.

The blanket overcoat, of course, is always white, but the fleece overcoat is made in many hues.

That most generally worn at present is dark green, though many shades of green and grey are also to be seen.

There is no kind of coat which is so suitable for the man whose wardrobe is limited and who only keeps one great coat.

It is not costly in the first instance, and it can be worn in the city and in the country and looks out of place nowhere.

The fleece overcoat is both warm and light, and admirably adapted to any form of sport.

The most fashionable cut has a broad collar and broad, low-rolled lapels with a "step," and this collar has the effect of making the average man look broader and better developed, and the well-developed man a perfect Hercules.

LEATHER BOOT LACES.

There are two kinds of leather boot laces commonly offered in shops, and I have never yet been able to decide which is the better value.

A pair of ordinary black leather laces costs you a penny, a pair of brown threepence; but a pair of porpoise laces of either colour runs you into sixpence.

I do not know whether the additional expenditure is really justified, for I have seen porpoise laces snap as easily as those of ordinary leather. For one thing, they are generally cut thinner than ordinary leather laces and there is less material for the strain to be distributed over.

For all heavy boots, I think that leather laces look best. They do not get shabby as do those of mohair, but all the same it is not to be supposed that when you put a pair of leather laces in your boots they are going to remain there for ever without requiring any attention on your part.

The great secret in keeping leather laces in condition is to give them a periodic anointing with polish, just as you treat the boots themselves. Smear a little polish on a piece of rag, and run the lace through it. This will not only keep the fibre of the leather in condition, but will also help to make both sides smooth, and it will not then matter so much which side comes uppermost when your boots are laced up.

This little tip is worth the attention of all who use leather laces, but particularly of those who happen to wear leggings that are laced up the front. The strain put on the lace in these—especially when you are putting them on or taking them off—is great, and unless you keep the laces properly smooth with polish they will inevitably fray and break.

CUFFS.

I am very glad to say that those abominations known as loose cuffs are now almost extinct. The reason is that man's dress has become, and is still becoming, more and more practical.

At one time it was considered that no being in trousers could pretend to be a gentleman unless he had a quarter of an inch of white starched linen showing at his wrists. To keep this linen white, frequent changes were necessary, and those whose purses did not enable them to make the necessary changes as to the rest of their garments, changed simply the cuffs; hence the institution of loose cuffs.

Now, however, it is not considered *infra dig.* for a gentleman to wear a flannel shirt with ordinary band cuffs or with soft double cuffs, and those who prefer, either for personal reasons or for financial reasons, to wear flannel rather than linen, may now do so without feeling that they are transgressing any unwritten law of dress.

In fact, it is seldom in these days that one sees a man in the country wearing a shirt with starched cuffs, and I hope that it will soon be the same in towns. I like smartness in male attire, but I like comfort better.

You will understand, of course, that when I say flannel cuffs are quite fashionable I am speaking of lounge suits. With frock and morning coat, shirts with linen cuffs must still be worn.

FULL DRESS BOOTS.

A reader asks me what is the correct kind of boot to wear with a frock or morning coat—button or lace, patent leather or not?

If the well-dressed man about town is to be your model, button boots are distinctly preferable. There is no necessity, however, for them to be of patent leather; glacé kid are equally correct, and more comfortable, if less smart.

They may, of course, have tops of antelope or other leather, but plain black tops are never out of place at any function so long as they have button fastenings and not laces.

THE TURNED BUTTON.

The button which comes at the top of the front of a man's trousers is sometimes put to face the outside and sometimes inwards. To insert in its hole a button which is reversed is a bit of a nuisance, and therefore many men forbid their tailors to finish their trousers in this manner, but there is good, sound common-sense in it nevertheless, and I advise all my readers to have their trousers finished with the top button turned inwards.

My reason is this. At the present time it is the custom to wear the lowermost button of the waistcoat unfastened, and, with the larger opening so made, it is just possible for the centre button on the waist-line of the trousers to show, if it happens to be turned outwards in the ordinary manner.

A button showing in this way looks very unsightly, and I strongly advise you to think this over when you give your order for the next suit.

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DRESS.

Gent's knitted half hose for winter wear, 1s. 6d. per pair.—Wilkinson, Accrington Road, Burnley.

Wanted, Scarlet Yeomanry dress waistcoat, chest 37in.; regulation pattern; good condition; lowest price.—Box 1492, "The Modern Man," 21, Tudor Street, London, E.C.

Two pairs gentleman's high-class winter boots (bespoke), stylish Derbys, 8's and 9's, wide fitting, first quality, box calf and brown willow, double soles, stitched all round; worth 42s., accept 25s., or 13s. either pair, approval.—33, Broadway, Kettering.

Riding breeches, West-End maker, hardly worn; exchange suit case or Auto-Strop safety razor and cash.—Write Box 1493, "The Modern Man," 21, Tudor Street, London, E.C.

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Gymnasium, steel, practically as new; cost £10 10s., price £5, or near offer.—Write Box 1502, "The Modern Man," 21, Tudor Street, London, E.C.

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Wanted, Tamlin's 30-egg incubator; will exchange model yacht, complete, with sails, boats, lamps, beautifully fitted, 6ft. 6in. over all, valued £7.—Box 1510, "The Modern Man," 21, Tudor Street, London, E.C.

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Retriever-pointer bitch, partly broken, retrieve tenderly, keep to heel, will make grand dog; 30s., or exchange for poultry to value.—Box 1509, "The Modern Man," 21, Tudor Street, London, E.C.

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Sirs,—Please send me a TRIAL BOTTLE GRATIS of Dr. Birley's "Plain" Syrup of Free (or unoxidised) Phosphorus. Also 24-paged Pamphlet. I enclose FOUR PENNY STAMPS to cover the expenses of postage, packing, and dispatching. I promise never to make a second application for a trial Bottle either directly or through any third party.

Signature and Address.....

D.X. 43.....

TRIAL BOTTLES CANNOT BE SENT ABROAD.

THE REAL ACTION OF PHOSPHORUS IN THE SYSTEM.

The action of Phosphorus in the human system may be briefly stated as the element of activity in the brain and nervous system. As the muscular and bony structures require gelatine, fibrine, and earthy matter for their support and sustenance, so do the brain and nervous system need the one element — Phosphorus — for their renewal and preservation. If the expenditure of nervous force exceeds its normal amount, the store of Phosphorus is diminished, and until its deficiency is made good vital action languishes; the brain and the whole of the bodily organs act with a waning vigour.

One of the ugliest features of our complex civilisation is the alarming prevalence of what is styled "Nervous breakdown."

Its causes are only too well known; but only recently has the full import of the part Free Phosphorus plays come to be recognised. The habits, occupation, incessant worry, late hours, and unnatural modes of living, which seem to follow civilisation, have the effect of depleting the human system of its necessary supply of Phosphorus.

The more immediate results are the loss of appetite, nausea, heartburn, flatulence, dizziness, sick headache, failure of physical and mental vigour, sleeplessness, distressing sense of weight and fulness in the stomach, all of which are known as dyspepsia and liver complaints.

Cases of every class have been treated with this new form of Phosphorus. The prematurely old, the worn and exhausted, the nervous and miserable in every position in life, have been gradually restored to a most vigorous and perfectly healthy state. From a lean and cadaverous condition they have become full in flesh, the countenance clear and ruddy, the eyes bright, the step and gait again elastic and determined, the temper cheerful, the brain again active, perception quick, memory tenacious, and the whole system and character changed from the most pitiable condition to the highest state of existence.

CURES ALL NERVE COMPLAINTS

BEST FOR BRAIN AND NERVES

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